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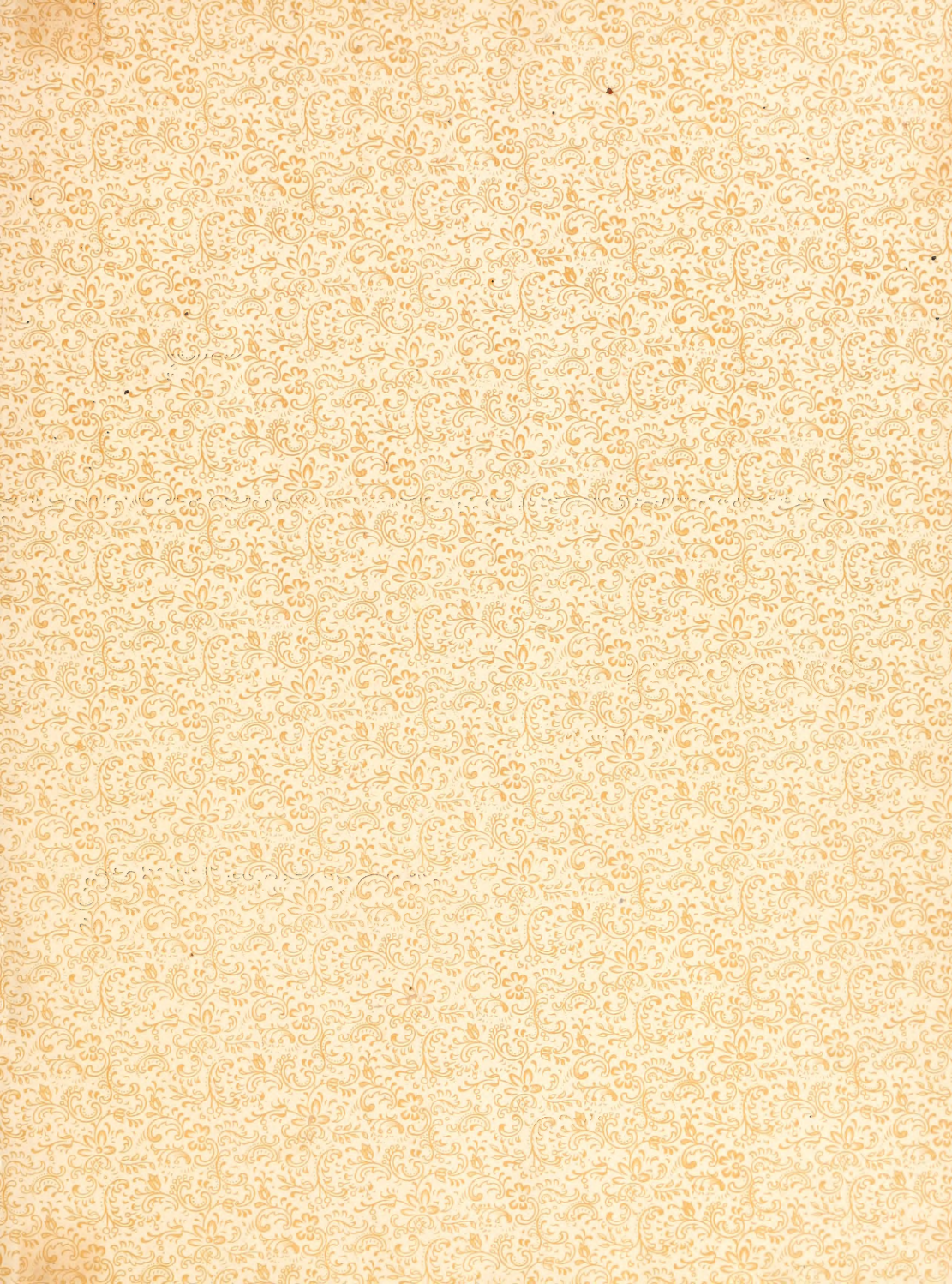
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PREFACE

purpose of the present work is

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~~in the first place HONORE DE BALZAC~~ ~~on the inaccessibility of the~~
~~libraries of France~~ ~~and not as a serious disadvantage.~~ ~~My~~
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~~evolution, of limitation along certain lines and extensions~~
~~along others, and it may be stated as follows: to take a limited~~
~~number of Balzac's~~ ~~A DISSERTATION~~ ~~to fix as definitely as possible~~

Presented to the board of University Studies of the Johns Hopkins
University in conformity with the requirement for the degree of
Doctor of Philosophy,

~~value of the figures. Time has forced me~~
~~to omit a study of~~ ~~June 1916~~ ~~every source of the figures; such a~~

~~study would be an interesting addition but is not indispensable~~
~~for the purpose in view, for which~~

~~my conclusions, in as much as our interest is centered, not on~~
~~the artistic manipulation~~ ~~by~~ ~~of the individual figurative conceptions,~~

~~which are, in fact, original with Balzac, but on the~~

~~general lines of his choice of comparisons and on the purpose for~~
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~~be suggestive.~~

PREFACE

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libraries of France would not be a serious disadvantage. My
present conception of the subject is the result of a gradual
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along others, and it may be stated as follows: to take a limited
number of Balzac's Figures and to fix as definitely as possible
their relation to the man, to show how they derive from him and
how they throw light on his complex nature, and finally to
estimate the literary value of the figures. Time has forced me
to omit ~~a study of the literary sources of the figures: such a~~
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~~as definite as I had hoped, but~~ *are less than might be desirable,* ~~but I trust that they~~ *will* at least
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~~general lines of his choice of comparisons and on the purpose for~~

to which the conclusions arrived at

~~which he most frequently uses them. It would have not been~~

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~~as definite as I had hoped, but I trust that they may at least~~

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be suggestive.

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ANALYSIS OF THE CHAPTERS

INTRODUCTION

The figures of speech as ordinarily classified and analyzed are interesting and instructive in the study of an author, but since they indicate the interrelation and grouping of his various concepts, their study should give us a deeper insight into his psychological ¹ ~~real nature~~. Some such aim is necessary to justify the study of Balzac's figures, since, in contrast to those of Victor Hugo, they offer no special interest in themselves; their interest comes from their relation to the mind that created them.

It has been necessary to limit the field of study to three characteristic novels: le Lys dans la vallée, le Renégat de garçon, and Eugénie Grandet. Also the figures other than simile and metaphor are ~~beside~~ ^{beyond} our purpose, as are all absolutely banal comparisons; we must draw our conclusions from those which indicate that both terms of the comparison were really present in the mind of the author when he created the figure. The table presents the classification of the figures and indicates both terms of the ~~comparison~~.

TABLE OF FIGURES

CHAPTER I TOPOICAL ANALYSIS OF THE TABLE OF FIGURES

CHAPTER II HISTORICAL ANALYSIS OF THE TABLE OF FIGURES

General comments on the form of the figures. They seem to convey the impression intended by the author. Artistically considered their main defects are: 1/ Pretentiousness, which is most disagreeable in the lys dans la vallée, where it ^{is} ~~appears~~ frequently in ^{pure} verbiage. As a result partly of the effort to magnify, the figures are frequently 2/ not apt and at times

absolutely meaningless. Inappropriety results also from 3/ excessive materialism, a revolting conception as the basis of a comparison. Or it may be only that the author 4/ insists too minutely on the materialistic conception. 5/ Incoherence or mixture of figures. All these defects merge into each other. They reveal to us in the author preconceived notions of similarity and consequently an imperfect analysis of the real similarities; they reveal also the lack of a critical faculty such as would enable [^]to distinguish [^]between the figurative conceptions or between a figurative and a literal conception.

CHAPTER III. CAUSES THAT CONTRIBUTED TO BALZAC'S IMPROPER USE OF THE FIGURE OF SPEECH.

Preamble: Restatement of the multiplicity and defects of the figure. The defects of the style as a whole correspond to the defects of the figures, which ^afact lends greater importance to our study. Three phases of the study: 1/ Why so many used? 2/ What explanation can we find for their nature? 3/ What is the impression on the reader? The present chapter deals with the first question.

The figures -- especially the great number in the Les gens de la vallée -- may be partially explained as mere literary adornments. But the figure of speech is also a very valuable and efficient aid to expression. To better understand Balzac's use of it as such, we must consider some of the problems that he faced.

The normal development of language among civilized peoples is opposed to vividness of impression; expressions that originally evoked an image of the thing in question tend by continual and universal use to become symbols of abstract concepts. In France, owing to the limitation of the vocabulary and of the usage of the words admitted, this tendency is not so adequately counter-

as in English
balanced by the introduction of additional modes of expression.
Such a language is especially suited to the transmission of
abstract ideas, and the masterpieces of the seventeenth and
eighteenth centuries in France are largely the artistic present-
ation of abstract conventional conceptions. The authors with
a rare creative genius --Rabelais, Moliere, and Moliere-Vincent --
have taken liberties with the language and have forged for them-
selves a medium more suited to their purpose, i.e. the production
of the illusion of life. Moliere's genius is of a similar
nature; that will be his style. The statement of Gautier
regarding the use of scientific terms is only a partial solution.
Moliere needed more; he sought freedom in the coinage and reviv-
ification of words; in the fortes prolativus he made free use of
the unfettered language of the sixteenth century. is also on
the proper mode of expression are shown in his criticism of the
algebraic style of Moliere, and in a paragraph of Louis Moliere,

in the mind of the reader. His practice in this very paragraph
indicates that this can best be accomplished by the figure of
speech.

Moliere was naturally drawn to the figure of speech as a
means of more complete expression; he uses it for the creation
and revivification of the image; he uses it also for the exact
representation of his ideas and as an outlet for an overflowing
imagination and sensibility. Examples. He was a master of the
word but that he did not fail in doing by the language of
the art of Moliere.

Prose fiction of this section. Difficulty: limitation of the results that can be obtained. A caution: keep in mind the point of view of the author.

1/ Influence of the characters on language and on the action.

Malzac, obsessed by his characters, frequently speaks their language. Simplification in language could be said and illustrative laudissant. There is an advantage in the singleness and hence force of the impression given by a novel, but there is danger in the loss of a critical perspective. A strong character may dominate the tone of a whole book, as in the case of la Vallée and la Vallée de la mort. Danger avoided in la Vallée de la mort.

2/ Figures resulting from the substitution of imagination for observation.

Malzac uses figures to describe the more intangible phases of life rather than to describe physical objects. His rather weak psychology is supplemented by the application of the theories of Pavlov, and being especially interested in the internal workings of the mind, he tries to use his admirable vision for externals in order to penetrate within (cf. la Vallée de la mort); he must depend then on an intuitive imagination and the result is figures of speech representing the internal in terms of the external (cf. la Vallée de la mort). Not only is the inner man a product of the imagination, but as a rule the whole character is constructed from a few traits rather than observed from life. The idea conveyed by the figures is frequently very vague, as a result probably of the vagueness of the author's own conception. It is true that there are certain things that can not be expressed abstractly, and that a concrete comparison is an aid to our understanding, but the comparison must be chosen with the greatest

core. The example of Stendhal and Flaubert show also that there are other methods of depicting the human soul.

7/ Relation of the figures to an attitude of mind.

The general materializing tendency of the figures is related to the realistic attitude of mind. The emphasis is on the external and the animal, in terms of which the spiritual is expressed. Victor Hugo, for instance, tends to animate and symbolize nature, and to compare objects to something that is more closely related to man. The comparison is dangerous but suggestive of Balzac's relation to the romantic school. He evidently lacks a very striking trait -- their attitude towards nature. There is a corresponding difference in methods of character creation. Balzac is fundamentally a realist; his romantic traits are superficial or emotional.

CHARLES V. MILLER ON THE USE BALZAC'S FIGURES AND HIS IDEAS.

The combination of ideas with figures ~~xxxxxxxxxxxxxxxx~~ imagination to produce figures of speech is suggested in Balzac's article on Stendhal. While in Victor Hugo the blending of two concepts is usually the result of the physical or symbolical similarities, in other words of perception or of imagination, Balzac shows a continual interaction of idea and figures. A dangerous fusion. The study of Balzac's ideas will be related especially to the livre dans la vallée, which is intimately associated with the études philosophiques and seems to have been spoiled by this association.

Some ideas of Balzac. The influence of the general principle of the unity of creation on the figures in group I. More specific formulations of the general principle; tendency to relate the spiritual to the material is strengthened by his inter-

est in the occult sciences. Theories of the fluids, light, and physiological aspect of the soul in Louis Lambert. Balzac was thoroughly obsessed by these conceptions even if he did not have absolute faith in them. Such conceptions seem to be due in part to the fact that banal figures such as "un regard de feu" take concrete shape in the mind of Balzac; at any rate they cause Balzac's discussion of spiritual phenomena to resemble a treatise on hydraulics, optics, or physiology. Example from Louis Lambert.

Balzac was still obsessed by these conceptions when he wrote the lys dans la vallée, and they are translated into his figures. Explanation of the frequent comparisons to flowers. The effect from an artistic standpoint is deplorable; the poetic pretension is not in accord with the figures; a potentially poetic comparison is frequently spoiled by excessive minuteness. The reason is the clearness of Balzac's own visualization. Examples in detailed comparisons to flowers.

Balzac's attempt to reconcile his materialist and spiritualism is probably justifiable from his standpoint, but the union of the two in the lys dans la vallée gives us the impression of something false.

CHAPTER VI THE STYLE OF BALZAC JUDGED ACCORDING TO ITS EFFECTIVENESS

An attempt to explain the contradictory impressions given by the style of Balzac. The psychology of the reader must be taken into account, for the term style presupposes a reader. Judgment must be largely personal but citations of the opinions of others give a broader basis for conclusions.

Spencer's theory that the best style is the one that can be understood with the least effort will hold for scientific discussions; but an author who ^{as} ~~desires~~ has to rival with nature

and translate into words all that he sees and feels. His main difficulty comes from the fact that the readers are content with mere words; a clear grammatical style offers no incentive for the formation ^{of concrete images} and hence may be the least effective, for when the words pass from the mind the ideal left is only vague and generalized. Oratorical and rhetorical devices used to attract the attention. The most effective are the simile and metaphor with their infinite possibilities of variation. They arrest the attention and definite concepts have to be formulated before the mind can grasp the meaning and pass on.

Citations from Balzac showing that he realized the difficulty. The boldest of the pioneers in the modern conception of style. He failed partially because language is a thing of convention and too much liberty would pervert its prime function. Yet the testimony of Caro, ~~and~~ Trucquiere; and Sainte-Beuve shows that he gained his ends. Even a certain confusion and incorrectness may be of value in giving a more exact representation of life, which is itself turmoil and confusion; also being less conventional they give us a more ^{of} person^{al} and intimate relation with the author. Moreover, a materialistic representation of life may strike us as the real as opposed to the ideal, for in our personal associations it is largely the material side of life that we see; and the style can best paint life by taking on some of its qualities.

CONCLUSION

A resumé and a glance at the future.

INTRODUCTION

The figures of speech compose a ^{very} interesting element of any style in which they are frequently utilized. Thus there have been numerous studies of their use by individual authors both ancient and modern, but the treatises are usually little more than catalogues of the figures arranged according to the fields from which the comparisons are drawn. Such a presentation enables us to judge of the range of the knowledge and interest of the author, the exactness of his observation, his power of imagination, and his aesthetic sense of fitness as leading him to choose an apt comparison and to express it in an attractive and illuminating manner. Such indications are both interesting and instructive, but it seems that we should be able to go deeper. The figure of speech, presenting infinite possibilities of arbitrary variation, should throw numerous sidelights on the most intimate phases of the author's personality, and from them we should be able to derive some generalized principles of figurative creation.

It is true in a certain sense that
~~If, as has been often stated, the style is the man, the~~
same should be said even more positively of the figures of speech, an element of style in which the author is comparatively free from the restraint of convention and into which the rhythm of his thought is translated freely and often unconsciously. Bourget in his essay on Stendhal says that "la première question à se poser sur un auteur est celle-ci : quelles images resuscitent dans la chambre noire de son cerveau quand il ferme les yeux? C'est l'élément premier de son talent. C'est son esprit même. Le reste n'est que la mise en œuvre." (1)

(1).—Essais de psychologie contemporaine, III, 424.

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Bourget is not specifically referring to figures of speech, but affirms that the kind of images -- physical, intellectual, or emotional -- that arise give an accurate index to the character of the mind; a statement which we can accept if we do not attempt too rigid an application. But the way in which these images are associated with one another, the way in which they are paired off should be still more instructive. We should be able to see what takes place in the author's mind when he wishes to describe a shabby parlor, a miser, a pure woman, or love in a young girl's breast. If there is no association of ideas, we have a literal description or account, but, if there is, that association, reflected in the simile or metaphor, represents a definite psychological phenomenon.

With this principle in mind we wish to study the similes and metaphors of Balzac, for whom some such a method is natural and, in order to justify the study, even necessary, for his figures have no particular interest in themselves. Victor Hugo for instance is an artist in imagery; one can pick up a dictionary of his figures and read with pleasure, without knowing the context and without thinking of the author, in the same way that you enjoy a snatch of song from an opera. Balzac's art is not refined to the point of being impersonal, of having a separate, self-sacrificing existence; it is indissolubly bound up with the man and his subject. He was guided by a happy instinct when he tried to fuse his work into a single whole, for there are few other cases where the author and his work form such a composite unit, and probably none where a single work loses more of its distinctive character by being isolated. The same is true for the figures of

speech; their main interest comes from their relation to the author. In studying the character of the figures, the manner and purpose of their use, we gain an insight into certain phases of the intellect and personality of the man; a process which is readily merged with the reverse, that of indicating how certain ideas, characteristics, infirmities perhaps, of the man are reflected in his figures and hence in his style. This will lead to some more general discussion of certain qualities of style in their relation to the author and in their effect on the reader.

When we recall that we are dealing with the author of the Comédie humaine, the problem of limitation of the field at once presents itself, for it would evidently be beyond the scope of this brief study to treat even superficially all of Balzac's figures. I have chosen for special study the Scènes de la vie de province, which include eleven novels, good, bad, and indifferent. They are almost coextensive with the period of his literary activity, and, what is much more important with an author who shows so little chronological development, they present striking examples of the most important phases of his genius. But for our present purposes we must have a more minute study of the figures than it is practicable to give to the whole of even this section; and so the larger part of this study will be concerned directly with three novels. The Leys dans la vallée gives us an excellent example of the poetic and romantic phase of Balzac and contains such a mass of figures that it is worthy of a separate treatment. The Le Père Goriot presents one of his famous masters of irony and illustrates well the author's materialism, which descends frequently to vulgarity and triviality. Both of these

are powerful works and reveal Balzac as a conscious and careful workman. The third novel, Eugénie Grandet, is a masterpiece in which the two phases of his work are fused, and is for our purposes all the more interesting, in that it is the one in which he has shown the most self-restraint, ^{so that} ~~in which~~ he has chastened his genius, ^{so that} and we may suppose that what we find in it represents a serious purpose and is not the result of his having given rein to the fancies of the moment. The conclusions ^{which} that we draw from these three novels ^{will} can then be tested by comparison to and examples from the other novels, more especially those in the Scènes de la vie de province.

We have also to limit the ^K kind of figures that we wish to study. As has already been indicated, we use the term "figure" in its most current acceptation, that is as meaning similes and metaphors, or in other words any expressed or implied comparison between objects or acts which belong to different categories or exist under different circumstances. If an inanimate object or a lower order of life is compared to man, we have a special form, to which the name personification has been given. The other rhetorical figures such as apostrophe, interrogation, and even metonymy and synecdoche, are mere modes of expression or linguistic conveniences. Hyperbole and antithesis do express a certain attitude of mind, and we find them frequently employed by Balzac, but the principle back of the creation of the individual figures of either type is always the same and nothing could be gained by a detailed study: the difference between two hyperboles for instance is merely one of degree.

But figurative expression has become such a vital part

of the language that there are many comparisons, usually in the form of metaphors, which have ceased entirely to be felt as such and have become the normal expression of the idea. They are translated directly into abstract concepts without evoking any image of the thing originally suggested as an analogical explanation of the object under discussion. Jeter un regard, une douleur profonde, l'impression de mélancolie sur une figure, trouver les intérêts de quelqu'un evoke no image of the literal meaning of jeter, profond, etc.; they are known as dead figures and in their study one approaches the domain of semantics. Their use indicates no semblance of originality and hence they do not interest us in the study of the individual style of an author. It is sufficient to state here that Balzac is exceedingly fond of figurative expression, and in addition to his original creations, one finds in his work an unusually large number of these banal figures. He shows an especial fondness for certain terms, such as jeter, profond, froid, and various others connected with the idea in combat, lien, and drame. The value of these, if there be any, consists in a possible added force of expression. [It is often difficult to decide whether a certain expression represents a personal imprint of the mind of the author or whether he has simply taken it already coined from the wealth of contemporary figurative language. In attempting to determine this I have made extensive use of the modern French dictionaries, but have relied especially on the sixth edition of the Dictionnaire de l'Académie Française, which is ^{less within} nearer to the dates of the author, and which ^{rather checked} gives a considerable number of figurative uses for the words. We can at least be sure that an expression from the pen of Balzac

when recognized by this conservative work, does not indicate any original creation on his part. Other elements must also be taken into account in our decisions. At the base of the figure of speech there is the idea of a comparison between two objects. The comparison may be new or rare, but this is not necessary in order that the figure have a stylistic and psychological significance. The most banal comparison may be revived and made real by a new form of expression. Further -- and this is more important for Balzac -- a banal figure becomes significant when it is prolonged by carrying out the comparison in detail, or when it is used over and over again. Briefly then, we wish to study those expressions of Balzac in which words are used in other than their usual relations, and in which, either on account of the infrequency of the basal idea, or of the insistence on it by a new manner of expression, by prolongation, or by frequent repetition, it is evident that the concept of the thing under discussion is not alone in the mind of the author, but that it is associated with something else which he sees and which he wishes us to see on account of certain suggestive similarities. It is evident that a banal simile is less likely to be excluded than a correspondingly banal metaphor, since the naming and ^{the} expressed comparison of two objects indicate that both objects were in the mind of the author..

In order to form and present any general conclusion^s, it has been necessary to make a very careful classification of the figures, the results of which are shown in the table that follows. The customary method of classifying figures of speech solely by the second term or ~~the~~ source of the comparison is inadequate for our purposes. According to this plan all comparisons to the sky

are classed together whether the first term of the comparison happens to be a pigeon's wing, the eyes of a maiden, or a sonata of Beethoven. A comparison is without meaning both stylistically and psychologically unless we take into consideration both terms and compare their real relations with that indicated by the figure of speech. A perfect table would be blocked out like a checker-board with the first terms of the comparisons listed vertically and the second terms horizontally; but so minute a classification would be confusing and in part superfluous. I have modified this method in accord with a ⁿgrouping which, ^{seemed} after a study of the figures in these three novels, best adapted to giving to the reader a comprehensive idea of the whole mass of figures, of their individual character, and of the purpose for which they are used. All the figures are grouped under six general headings corresponding to what Balzac wishes to describe; opposite each heading are classified as minutely as seemed profitable the second terms of the comparisons.

In the table I have included only those figures used by Balzac or by his spokesman Félix de Vandernes; in this way I eliminate a disturbing element resulting from Balzac's attempt to characterize his men and women by their modes of expression. The figures used in dialogue will come in for their share of discussion in the course of the study.

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Table of Figures

		Lys dans la vallée	En ménage le garçon	Eugénie Grandet	Summary
I. Man to	A. man	124	35	36	195
	B. animals . .	46	26	35	107
	C. plants . .	56 ⁸³	6	9	71 ⁴⁸
	D.	46 ²¹	21	20	87 ⁸¹
II. look(A)	to material phenomena	28	11	6	45
voice(B)		42	6	10	60
III.	A. plants	35 ³⁴	1	2	38 ⁴⁰
	B. fluids	55 ⁵³	1	14	70 ⁶⁸
	C. flame	41 ⁴⁷	2	10	53 ⁵⁷
	D.	34	4	24	62 ⁷⁰
E.	phenomena	9	—	2	11
	music	9	—	2	11
	F. other material phenomena	103	7	35	145
IV. Abstract relations and conditions of man	to physical	76 ⁷⁹	17	17	137
V. Acts to acts of similar nature		19	13	33	65
VI. things to	A. things	41	17	20	78
	B. living beings	31	14	9	54
Total		307 ⁴	117	285	1304 ³

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Topical Analysis of the Table of Figures

I Group I

✓ In this group the figures, as expressed, treat of man as a physical organism, but the intellectual and spiritual sides are naturally present in the mind of the author and in many cases really form the basis of the comparison.

Group I, A

Comparisons between human beings are very frequent in Balzac; he describes the acts or the emotions of a character by comparing them to the acts or emotions in a person of different social status or under different circumstances. In many cases, of course, the similarity is so great that the comparison could hardly be called a figure of speech, and even those that I have listed, which are usually expressed in the form of similes, might be called with greater exactness analogies, in order to distinguish them from those figures in which there is more real imagery. In the Lys dans la vallée we find twenty-seven figures based on differences of age, sex, and physiological condition, among which the most interesting are the seventeen comparisons to children: "Cet homme était devenu inquiet, comme l'enfant qui ne voit plus remuer le pauvre insecte qu'il tourmente" (p. 261); "La comtesse se leva par un mouvement d'impatience, comme un enfant qui veut un jouet." (p. 261); "Avec ce courage d'enfant qui ne doute de rien," (p. 255); "Aussitôt, comme un enfant qui, descendu dans un abîme en jouant, en cueillant des fleurs, voit avec angoisse qu'il lui sera impossible de remonter, n'aperçoit plus le sol humain qu'à une distance infranchissable, se sent tout seul, à la nuit, et entend les hurlements sauvages,"

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je compris que nous étions séparés par tout un abîme" (p. 361).
Forty nine figures are based on social, political, economic, and
racial distinctions, the soldier, the sovereign, and the slave offer-
ing the most frequent source of comparison : "Comme l'enfant ar-
raché par Napoléon aux tendres soins du logis, elle eut habitude
ses pieds à marcher dans la boue et dans la neige, accoutumé son
front aux boulets, toute sa personne à la passive obéissance du
soldat" (p. 384); "Arabelle voulut montrer son pouvoir comme un sul-
tan qui, pour prouver son adresse, s'amuse à décoller des innocents"
(p. 393); "Un contentement semblable à celui de l'esclave qui
trompe son maître" (p. 397).

A very interesting feature of this novel lies in the
thirty seven figures in which religious terms are used with ref-
erence to carnal man, especially to express love between the two
sexes and its effects. Madame de Mortsaufr is a saint, a martyr,
a nun : "La sainte qui souffrait son lent martyre à Clochegourde"
(p. 343); "Sermon sur son âme de sainte et de martyre" (p. 343);
"Attendant toujours une nouvelle douleur, comme les martyrs attend-
aient un nouveau coup" (p. 395). There are also specific Biblical ref-
erences, as : "Couchée comme si elle avait été foudroyée par la
voix qui terrassa saint Paul" (p. 274). But much more frequent and
striking are the specific comparisons of the sensuous - if not
sensual - to the religious emotions; after catching the tears of
Madame de Mortsaufr in his hand and drinking them, Félix says to
her : "Voici la première, la sainte communion de l'amour. Oui, je
viens de participer à vos douleurs, de m'unir à votre âme, comme
nous nous unissons au Christ en buvant sa divine substance" (p. 396);
or "Elle qui avait tout laissé pour moi, comme on laisse tout pour

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 dieu" (p.59); or " Elle recevait nos adorations comme un prêtre
 recevait l'incens à la messe" (p.405). In addition to the references
 to the Bible mentioned above, there are eleven allusions that may
 be classed as figures under this heading. They are drawn from
 classic, Italian, and French sources, with one reference to Don Quixote,
 and they offer no special interest, with the exception perhaps
 of the two comparisons of Félix and Lucile to Petrarch and Laura (pp.110, 163).
 469 507

In the other two novels the figures group themselves similarly except that there are ^{almost} ~~practically~~ no references to religion. In Un étiage de berges, 31 comparisons with religion, and, among them, eight to the sick, dying, and dead: "Maigre comme l'est une étique deux heures avant sa mort" (p.333); "Une femme, verte comme une noyée de deux jours" (p.376). Fourteen have reference to the professions, with that of the soldier predominating: "Ce sang-froid de général en chef qui permet de conserver l'œil clair et l'intelligence nette au milieu du tourbillon des choses" (p.130); "M. Hochon... passa l'assiette à travers la table au jeune peintre avec le silence et le sang-froid d'un vieux soldat qui se dit au commencement d'une bataille: 'Allons, aujourd'hui, je puis être tué'" (p.222); "Le père Rouget... vint dans la rue prendre Flore par la main, comme un/ avare eût fait pour son trésor" (p.296). There are five allusions of no special interest, with the exception of two referring to recent French history and having a ~~very~~ pretentious sound: "Flore tomba sous la domination de cet homme, comme la France était tombée sous celle de Napoléon" (p.316); "En présence de cette agonie, le neveu restait impassible et froid comme les diplomates, en 1814, pendant les

convulsions de la France impériale"(p.354).

In Eugénie Grandet there are six comparisons to children :
 "J'écoute, écoute, répondit humblement le bonhomme en prenant la malicieuse contenance d'un enfant qui rit intérieurement de son professeur, tout en paraissant lui prêter la plus grande attention"(p.184); "Les yeux attachés sur les louis, comme un enfant qui, au moment où il commence à voir, contemple stupéfait le premier objet; et comme à un enfant, il lui échappa un sourire pénible"(p.184);
 "A la vue^e de ses richesses, elle se mit à applaudir en battant les mains, comme un enfant forcé de perdre son trop-plein de joie dans les naïfs mouvements du corps"(p.185). Eleven figures refer to professions, as the comparisons of the astute Grandet to an astronomer (p.9) and to an alchemist (p.68). More interesting here are those that refer to particular situations, and which very usually have a pretentious ^{character} : "L'attente d'une mort annoncée et publique est moins horrible peut-être pour un ^Condamné que ne l'était pour Madame Grandet et pour sa fille l'attente des événements qui devaient terminer ce déjeuner de famille"(p.174);
 "Certes, la Parisienne qui, pour faciliter la fuite de son amant, soutient de ses faibles bras une échelle de soie, ne montre plus de courage que n'en déployait Eugénie en remettant le sucre sur la table"(p.92); "Mais à la vérité, la vie des célèbres sœurs hongroises, attachées l'une à l'autre par une erreur de la nature, n'avait pas été plus intime que ne l'était celle d'Eugénie et de sa mère"(p.82). In addition to the last quoted figure there are eleven allusions, most of them of a rather pretentious nature. Eugénie is compared to the Venus of Milo, the Jupiter of Phidias, and three times to the Virgin Mary. Similarly the Cruchots and

"The first of these is the fact that the...
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the Des Grassins are the Medici and the Pazzi of Saumur.

In the comparisons between human beings, then, we find, as we naturally expect, that the professions play a considerable part. But considering the very small place that the child holds in the Comédie humaine, we are a little surprised to note the insistence on child life; the figures indicate that Balzac had observed rather closely the good and bad sides of child nature; and in addition to the extended figures there is a still larger number of cases in which enfant or d'enfant is used with a psychological connotation. It is interesting to note here that Balzac in his correspondence is continually speaking of his own nature as being that of a child. (1)

Group I, B.

In view of Balzac's frequent statement of the correspondence between the human and animal species, we naturally look with interest to see how this idea finds expression in the figures of speech. We find that, though Balzac is fond of animalistic comparisons, he does not let his theory distort his sense of reality. A single animal could not represent a single man, unless its character were greatly enlarged or that of the man simplified; much less could an animal represent a class or profession in human society. Thus, while one type of animalistic comparisons usually dominates for a character, others are regularly used to represent his various physical or other traits.

In the Lys dans la vallée the most striking trait is the frequent comparisons to birds, of which there are thirteen, nine having reference to Madame de Mortsauf. These comparisons concern her movements: "Une femme...se posa près de moi par un mouvement

(1) Cf. Lettres à l'étrangère, I, pp. 129, 315, 357, etc.

The day following the 20th of July 1937.

In the early morning of the 21st of July 1937, the

author, who was then in the hospital, was informed that

the following day he would be able to leave the hospital.

On the 22nd of July 1937, the author was informed that

he would be able to leave the hospital on the 23rd.

On the 23rd of July 1937, the author was informed that

he would be able to leave the hospital on the 24th.

On the 24th of July 1937, the author was informed that

he would be able to leave the hospital on the 25th.

On the 25th of July 1937, the author was informed that

he would be able to leave the hospital on the 26th.

Page 1, 2

In view of the author's statement of the above conditions

between the author and the hospital, the author is

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d'oiseau qui s'abat sur son nid"(p.⁴⁰⁸~~28~~); more frequently it is her voice : "La voix de l'ange qui, par intervalles, s'élevait comme un chant de rossignol au moment où la pluie va cesser"(p.⁴⁴⁹~~81~~); or the comparison may be less external, more intellectual(2) : Madame de Mortsaufr était le bengali transporté dans la froide Europe, tristement posé sur son bâton, muet et mourant dans sa cage où le garde un naturaliste"(p.⁵⁵⁶~~232~~). The other comparisons are rather well distributed over the animal kingdom; the lion, tiger, wolf, monkey, dog, horse, serpent and insect are each represented by two or more figures, and most of them are applied to several of the characters. Madame de Mortsaufr has "cette expression de lionne au désespoir"(p.⁵⁴⁹~~283~~) while of Lady Dudley it is said that "semblable à la lionne qui a saisi dans sa gueule et rapporté dans son antre une proie, elle veillait à ce que rien ne troublât son bonheur, et ne gardait comme une conquête incertaine"(p.⁵⁷⁰~~374~~). The most interesting, perhaps, and the most suggestive of character are those referring to M. de Mortsaufr, whom Balzac himself came to consider the most striking character of the book(1) : "Je fus une pâture à ce lion sans ongles et sans crinière"(p.⁴⁴³~~72~~); "ses yeux étincelèrent comme ceux des tigres"(p.⁴⁴⁵~~72~~); "Son visage ressemblait vaguement à celui d'un loup blanc qui a du sang du mouton"(p.⁴²⁶~~374~~), cf. p.⁴⁹⁶~~148~~); "

(1) Lettres à l'étrangère, I, p. 328

(2) I use the term "intellectual figure" to denote one based on an intellectual^{conceived} comparison as contrasted with a figure based on purely external and physical similarities. The term is less liable to cause confusion than "logical".

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"Ces sortes d'esprits se heurtent volontiers aux endroits où brille
~~est~~ la lumière, ils y retournent toujours en bourdonnant sans rien
 pénétrer et fatiguent l'âme comme les grosses mouches fatiguent
 l'oreille en fredonnant le long des vitres" (p. 539⁵³⁹); "Le comte
 avait été, comme les mouches par un jour de grande chaleur, plus pi-
 quant, plus acerbe, plus changeant qu'à l'ordinaire" (p. 475⁴⁷⁵).

The animalistic comparisons in Un ménage de garçon are well
 scattered over the animal kingdom, but they have almost always a
 decidedly pejorative value. The birds are usually birds of prey,
~~but such comparisons, however, which are no less flattering than~~ : "elle était
 grasse comme une grive après la vendange" (p. 69⁶⁹); or "Cet amour ma-
 ternel... tout aussi nécessaire aux commencements de l'artiste que
 les soins de la poule à ses petits jusqu'à ce qu'ils aient des
 plumes" (p. 124¹²⁴). The effect produced seems to be that desired by
 Balzac. Rouget appears as a butterfly, and twice each as a horse,
 sheep, and dog, and the impression on us each time is about the same:
 "Semblable au papillon qui s'est pris les pattes dans la cire fon-
 dante. Une bougie, Rouget dissipa rapidement ses dernières forces"
 (p. 317³¹⁷); in the comparisons to dogs the idea of fidelity which usual-
 ly dominates with Balzac, gives place to the idea of servility and
 submissiveness : "Sur le palier Jean Jacques couché comme un chien"
 (p. 193¹⁹³); "Il guettait les mouvements de cette créature comme un
 chien guette les moindres gestes de son maître" (p. 205²⁰⁵).

In Eugénie Grandet the keynote of Grandet's character seems
 to be expressed in the double figure : "Financièrement parlant,
 M. Grandet tenait du tigre et du bon : il savait se coucher, se blot-
 tir, envisager longtemps sa proie, sauter dessus; puis il ouvrait la

gueule de sa bourse, y engloutissait une charge d'écus, et se couchait tranquillement, comme le serpent qui digère, impassible, froid, méthodique" (p. ²²⁵9). The idea expressed in the figure persists throughout the book with reference to Grandet. The tiger appears in two other similes and to it may be related five metaphors such as : "Le beau marquisat de Froidfond fut alors convoyé vers l'Éso-phage de V. Grandet" (p. ²³⁰17). Grandet's cruelty, cunning, and impassiveness, his glance that frightens or chills recall the figure of the serpent or the later one of the basilisk (p. ²²⁷12). Eugénie is referred to most frequently as a bird with its light-hearted innocence or its sad fate : "Semblable à ces oiseaux victimes du haut prix auquel on les met et qu'ils ignorent" (p. ²⁴⁴87). Madame Grandet has "une résignation d'insecte tourmenté par des enfants" (p. ²³⁸84); and the same timid meekness is indicated by four other figures : biche, couette, souris, and agneau. Nanon is compared five times to a faithful, affectionate dog. Charles is described in the figures in contrast to the natives of Saumur; he appears as a giraffe -- a curiosity -- or "un colimaçon dans une ruche, ou... un paon dans quelque obscure basse-cour de village" (p. ²⁴⁶40).

Group I, C.

The comparisons of man to the plant world have not the legal significance of the comparisons to animals and they are relatively infrequent in Un ménage de garçon and Eugénie Grandet, where they are nearly all based on outward appearance, usually color, with the exception of a few poetic figures in the later novel : "La Desœuilles avait pris les tons mûrs d'une pomme de reinette de Pâques" (GM. p. ¹²²78); "Une vague ressemblance avec des fruits cotonneux qui n'ont plus ni saveur ni suc" (EG. p. ²³⁷28);

1. "The first step in the process of the development of a new product is the identification of a market need." (1998, p. 10)

[illegible]

1912-1913

"cette physiologie calme, colorée, bardée d'une lueur comme une jolie fleur délicate" (EG.p.71)²⁶⁸; "Proie autant qu'une fleur née au fond d'une forêt est délicate" (EG.p.97)²⁸⁷.

In the Lys dans la vallée there are twenty-two comparisons of woman to a flower, eighteen of them referring directly to Madame de Mortsauf. A few refer to external appearance only, as : "Le pâleur verdâtre des fleurs de saurilla quand elles s'entreouvrent" (p.89)⁶²⁴; but they are usually more intellectual, and they present an elaborate development of the idea expressed in the title: of the novel; we see the flower under all conditions : "Le lys broyé dans les brouillards d'une machine en acier poli" (p.118)⁴⁷¹; "Cette fleur, incessamment fermée dans la froide atmosphère de son ménage, s'épanouit à ses regards" (p.122)⁵⁵⁵; "Pendant la tête comme un lys trop chargé de pluie" (p.158)⁵⁷³; "Le lys de cette vallée où elle croissait pour le ciel en la remplissant du parfum de ses vertus" (p.171)⁴¹¹; "La plupart de mes idées... sont nées là comme les parfums émanent des fleurs, mais là verdoyait la plante inconnue qui jeta sur mon âme la féconde poussière" (p.171)⁴²²; "La reconnaissance de Madame de Mortsauf fut naturelle comme les effets du mois de mai sur les prairies, comme ceux du soleil sur les fleurs abîmées" (p.189)⁵²⁵. The other comparisons are to plants, trees or fruits : "Ce corps aussi déliant que l'est une plante venue en terre étrangère, les rigueurs d'un climat étranger" (p.191)⁴²⁴; "Elle prenait l'attitude d'un saule pleurant" (p.191)⁴²⁴; "Elle était mortifiée comme le fruit sur lequel les meurtrissures commencent à paraître et qu'un ver intérieur fait prématurément blondir" (p.264)⁵⁷⁸.

Group I, D

The comparisons to inanimate objects are more commonplace; they are based usually on similarity of color, form, or qualities of resistance, and they interest us especially as they differ in the three novels, according to the choice of the object to which man is compared. In the Lvs dans la vallée, the comparisons are naturally used for poetical effect and are frequently classic : "La main était blanche comme une porcelaine éclairée par une lumière" (p. 424); "La main blanche qui partageait ses cheveux en deux bandeaux semblables aux ailes d'un porteur" (p. 424); "Après avoir effleuré le doux jasmin de ce peau et bu le lait de cette coupe pleine d'amour" (p. 423).

In Un homme de paille the comparisons are chosen rather with the intention of producing disgust or an impression of strength : "Son teint couleur de pain d'épice" (p. 147); "Son oripeau couleur de terre" (p. 147); "Les paupières étaient comme les poils d'un œuf" (p. 333); "Un tas de linge et de vieilles robes les unes sur les autres, bordées de boue à cause de la saison, tout cela monté sur des pressés jaunes" (p. 331); "Les muscles lui tremblaient plus que s'ils eussent été de bronze" (p. 305). "Blancs et immobiles comme des statues de plâtre" (p. 281) forms a striking contrast with "aux jolis statuette du moyen âge" (IV. p. 204) or "les statues antiques" (IV. p. 420) in the Lvs, a novel, then, however, does not restrict itself entirely to poetic figures. We find such expressions as : "Ces creux qui font ressembler la nuque de certaines femmes à des troncs d'arbre" (p. 420). In addition to the contrast between the two novels noted above; there are other features in the Lvs that deserve mention; the frequent comparisons to works of art, as illustrated above, and to natural phenomena : sky, cloud, etc.

"Ce visage, serein comme un beau ciel après la tempête" (p. 557). ⁶³⁰

In general the comparisons are not confined so strictly to purely physical properties.

Eugénie Grandet stands halfway between these two extremes; we find in it parallels for both types : "Leurs figures aussi flétries que l'étaient leurs habits râpés, aussi plissées que leurs pantalons" (p. 240); "sa face trouée comme une écumoire" (p. 241); "Il restait inébranlable, âpre et froid comme une pile de granit" (p. 353); "Ses traits, les contours de sa tête... ressemblaient aux lignes d'horizon si doucement tranchées dans le Monten des lacs tranquilles" (p. 263). ~~The~~ ^{pejorative} figures, though not so brutal as in Un ménage de garçon, still predominate.

In general we may say that the comparisons to inanimate objects are happy and striking; that they produce the impression which Balzac wished to give. Even the poetic comparisons, while not so original, are often very well chosen.

2. Group II.

This group is in the nature of a transition between Group I and Group III. We are dealing with two physical attributes of man -- speech and look -- but both are considered here according to their moral significance, as expressing the soul of the actor or as affecting those about him.

~~In the~~ Group II. ~~A~~

In the Lys dans la vallée the look is represented twenty times as a light or flame: "Je sentais en moi-même ce regard, il m'avait fondé de lumière" (p. 446); "Le vieil yeux sortaient deux rayons qui versaient la vie à cette pauvre faible créature" (p. 438).

In three figures the look is, as it were, personified by substituting it for the imagination: "Mon regard se régalaît en glissant sur la belle parleuse, il pressait sa taille, baisait ses pieds", ⁴¹⁹ (p. 28). The rest are more material expressions.

In Un Régime de garçon there are six comparisons to flame, while four give the impression of something hard and metallic: "Un regard de plomb" (²⁷⁹ p. 301) or "Les teintes de l'acier" (²⁶⁹ p. 300). The five comparisons to flame in Mademoiselle Grandet do not express the idea so baldly: "La clareté magique de ses yeux où scintillaient de jeunes pensées d'amour" (²⁸¹ p. 38).

Group II, B

Speech is expressed in the Lys dans la valée four times as light and eight times as a fluid: "Sa voix qui pénétra mon âme et la remplit comme un rayon de soleil remplit et dore le cachot d'un prisonnier" (⁴¹⁶ p. 14); "Quand j'eus senti le choc de ce torrent qui charria mille terreurs en mon âme" (⁴⁰² p. 14). Ten figures represent the speech as something that wounds: "Tous ces mots étaient des coups de poignard froidement donnés aux endroits les plus sensibles" (⁵⁸⁰ p. 267); "Les larmes envenime de ses paroles" (⁶¹⁷ p. 314).

Other types are represented by the following examples: (music) - "Un son de voix nouveau, comme si l'instrument eût perdu plusieurs cordes, et que les autres se fussent détachés" (⁵⁶² p. 241); (sounds in nature) - "Il faisait ressembler ses phrases à des flots mous, murmurés par la mer sur un sable fin" (⁴⁸⁹ p. 133); (material objects) -

-- "La plaisanterie française est une dentelle avec laquelle les femmes savent embellir la joie qu'elles donnent" (⁶⁰² p. 297).

Un régime de garçon contains one comparison to flame, the rest being to something of more solid texture - cannon-ball,

$\omega^+ = \frac{1}{\sqrt{2}}(\omega_1 + i\omega_2)$, $\omega^- = \frac{1}{\sqrt{2}}(\omega_1 - i\omega_2)$

arrow, knife, - together with such expressions as : "...avaient
 deux fois la réponse suivante" (p. 234). ^[als] ~~These~~ contains
 two comparisons to music; the rest are materialistic though not
 brutally so, possessing in fact little originality : "Le flux de
 mots où il noyait sa pensée" (p. 227); "Ces mots retentirent dans le
 cœur de la pauvre fille et y pesèrent de tout leur poids" (p. 287).

3. Group III

This group has to do with the spiritual phenomena within a
 man's breast, his emotions, desires, passions, thoughts, etc.

Group III, A

The comparisons to plants forms one of the most striking
 features of the lys dans la vallée. This conception crops out
 persistently throughout the book, and the following examples will
 illustrate some of the varied conditions under which Balzac sees
 the flowers. "Des tourments subis en silence par les âmes dont
 les racines tendres encore ne rencontrent que de durs cailloux
 dans le sol domestique, dont les premières frondaisons sont dé-
 chirées par des mains haineuses, dont les fleurs sont atteintes
 par la gelée au moment où elles s'ouvrent" (p. 394); "La virilité
 qui passait tardivement ses rameaux verts" (p. 404); "Espérances
 cultivées sans fruit, incessamment regrettées et déracinées" (p. 518).
 "S'il y avait en son cœur des endroits friables où je pusse at-
 tacher quelques rameaux d'affection" (p. 405); "Ils remonteront au fond
 de votre cœur les roses en bouton que la pudeur y dérase" (p. 280);
 "Il respiré dans cette vallée les enivrantes odeurs d'une espé-
 rance fleurie" (p. 435); "L'âme rebrunie" [in the autumn] (p. 400);
 "Ainsi des orages de plus en plus troubles et chargés de graviers
 déracinaient par leurs vagues âpres les espérances les plus

profondément plantées dans son cœur" (p. 354); "L'attrait de l'infidélité semblable à ces crues de la Loire qui ensablent à jamais une terre, avait passé sur son âme en faisant un désert là où verdoyait d'opulentes prairies" (p. 573); Such comparisons, which differ only in mode of expression from many of those listed under Group I, C, appear only sporadically in the other two novels.

Group III, B

The comparisons to fluids in the Lys dans la vallée may be divided unto three general classes, according to whether the conception is that of a fluid within the soul, a fluid in which the soul bathes, or a fluid in the more general sense, including electricity and effluvia. "Les sentiments courent toujours vifs dans ces ruisseaux creusés qui retiennent les eaux, les purifient, rafraichissent le cœur et fertilisent la vie" (p. 563); Abîmés en ces rêveries orageuses pendant lesquelles les pensées gonflent le sein, animent le front, viennent par vagues, jaillissent écumeuses" (p. 481); "Mon frère aîné semblait avoir absorbé le peu de maternité qu'elle avait au cœur" (p. 405); "Notre puissance s'échappe toute entière sans aliment, comme le sang par une blessure inconnue. La sensibilité coule a torrents" (p. 443); "Océan d'amour où qui n'a pas nagé ignore toujours quelque chose de la poésie des sens" (p. 566); "Une de ces douceurs infinies qui sent d'âme ce qu'est un bain pour le corps fatiguée; l'âme est alors rafraichie sur toutes ses surfaces, caressée dans ses plis les plus profonds" (p. 473); "Des pensées trempées de mélancolie tombent sur mon cœur comme une pluie fine et grise embruée un joli pays après quelque beau lever de soleil" (p. 427); "Rassembler dans l'air les effluves de cette âme" (p. 461).

• 2,113 Yards

3. A number of applications are

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We find the same type of figures in Eugénie Grandet in somewhat less pretentious form : "La compassion, excitée par le malheur de celui qu'elle aime, s'épanche dans le corps entier d'une femme" (p. 276); "Charles ne put-il se soustraire à l'influence des sentiments qui se dirigeaient vers lui en l'inondant, pour ainsi dire" (p. 280); "La pauvre fille, qui s'abandonna délicieusement au courant de l'amour; elle saisit sa félicité comme un nageur saisit la branche de saule pour se tirer du fleuve et se reposer sur la rive" (p. 329); "L'âme a besoin d'absorber les sentiments d'une autre âme" (p. 371).

Group III, C.

The following examples illustrate the comparisons to flame or light in the Les Deux Vallées : "La constante éducation de son âme sur les siens, cette essence nourrissante épanchée à flots comme le soleil émet sa lumière" (p. 421); "Elle ne retira la lumière qui depuis six ans brillait sur sa vie" (p. 505); "Le désir serpente dans ses veines comme le signal d'un feu de joie" (p. 476); "En retour de ma chair laissée en lambeaux dans son cœur, elle me versait ses lueurs de ce divin amour" (p. 504); "Plusieurs pensées s'élevèrent en moi comme des lueurs" (p. 450).

The figures in the other novels are of a similar nature, all being more or less happy reworkings of the familiar conception of love, hate, pain, knowledge, etc., as light or fire. "Se figure... parut s'éclaircir aux rayons d'une pensée" (MG. p. 190); "Atteinte par un dernier rayon de maternité" (MG. p. 149); "Mille pensées confuses naissent dans son âme et y croissent à mesure que s'élèvent au dehors les rayons du soleil" (EG. p. 266); "Dans la pure et monotone

vie des jeunes filles, il vient une heure délicieuse où le soleil leur épanche ses rayons dans l'âme" (EG. p. 265).

Group III, D.

The physiological error runs in the novels fall into the classes. In the Les Amis de l'École forty-five figures show a confusion between moral and physical conditions of man; the account of the soul experiences of the two main characters frequently resembles a text-book of physiology: "Une grande quantité de fibres colorées qui se débattaient à prendre tout les précautions pour ne le point blesser" (p. 440); "Elle voulait qu'il vive, du point pour la suture de son cœur" (p. 566); "Saignant, mais avec un appareil sur ses blessures" (p. 584); "Un cœur nuclé... des arrecteurs entachés d'égoïsme" (p. 533). The conception that is implied is the above figures - that is, of the soul as a living physical organism -- is definitely expressed in thirty-six figures: the idea of physical life is impressed on us more forcibly in these last, because the soul is represented as being rather active than passive and appears usually as a man, but occasionally as a bird or animal: "Le corps succombe sous les étreintes de l'âme" (p. 469); "A leur horriblement laquet, qui fit sur les cadavres de ceux qu'il tue" (p. 568); "Il s'éveillait en moi des idées qui glissaient comme des fantômes" (p. 436); "Que les grandes morales soient des créatures qui ont leurs appétits, leurs instincts, et veulent augmenter l'espace de leur empire comme un propriétaire veut augmenter son domaine" (p. 448); "Un visage où les ailes du plaisir avaient semé leur poussière diaprée" (p. 605); "Elle, si respectée par le plaisir, qui ne l'avait jamais enlacée de ses engourdissements" (p. 604).

The same two divisions appear in Eugénie Grandet. "Mais à son insu l'égoïsme lui avait été inoculé. Les germes de l'économie politique à l'usage du Parisien, latent en son cœur, ne devaient pas tarder à y fleurir" (p. 142³¹⁹). "Peut-être la profonde passion d'Eugénie devrait-elle être analysée dans ses fibrilles les plus délicates; car elle devint, diraient quelques railleurs, une maladie" (p. 108²⁹⁵); "Flever à la brochette l'avarice de son héritière" (p. 26²³⁶); "Elle avait conçu l'amour" (p. 171³³⁹).

A great many of the figures in Group II contain the same conception as those of this class; if a look or a word acts like a dagger it must have a physical organism on which to act. But any figure of speech if carried to its logical conclusion would necessitate a figurative interpretation of all related phenomena; it must be classified, then, according to the dominant idea. We must decide what phase of the subject the attention of the author was centred upon when he created the figure, and in the above mentioned figures Balzac is evidently trying at that particular moment to represent the look and the speech.

Group III, E.

The comparisons to music in Eugénie Grandet consist merely in the use of the musical terms crescendo (p. 41³⁴⁷) and rinforzando (p. 61²⁶¹), the effect being rather comical. From the Lys dans la vallée the following are typical: "l'interrogation brusque faite à son cœur, un coup donné pour savoir s'il résonne à l'unisson" (p. 83⁴⁵⁰); "Les gradations... de la musique appliquées au concert de nos voluptés" (p. 299⁶⁰³).

Group III, F.

In this class are all the concrete expressions of the inner man which do not come under any of the headings above. The source of the comparison ranges from jewels, furniture, and weapons of

The same two divisions appear in Théorie Grammaticale. "Mais
 a son tour l'égoïsme lui avait été inoculé. Les germes de l'é-
 conomie politique a l'usage du Parisien latent en son cœur, ne
 devaient pas tarder à y fleurir" (p. 112). "Pent-être la profonde
 passion d'Wagnér devait-elle être analysée dans ses fibres
 les plus délicates; car elle était, à l'instar de ces plantes
 une malicieuse" (p. 104); "Et c'est là que se trouve le son
 véritable" (p. 104); "elle avait connu l'amour" (p. 111).

A great many of the figures in Group II contain the same
 conception as those of this class: if a look or a word acts like
 a dagger, it must have a physical organism on which to act. But
 any figure of speech if carried to its logical conclusion would
 necessitate a figurative interpretation of all related phenomena;
 it must be classified, then, according to the dominant idea. We
 must decide what phase of the subject the attention of the author
 was centred upon when he created the figure, and in the above
 mentioned figures Wagnér is evidently treated at that particular
 moment to represent the look and the speech.

Group III, F.

The comparison to Wagnér in Théorie Grammaticale reveals
 in the use of the lexical terms Wagnér (p. 11) and Wagnér
 (p. 11), the effect being rather comical. From the l'ya dans la
 values the following are typical: "l'interprétation d'une fausse
 à son cœur, un coup donne pour savoir s'il respire à l'instant"
 (p. 11); "les grâtes... de la machine anglaise en concert de
 nos volutes" (p. 109).

Group III, F.

In this class are all the concrete expressions of the inner
 man which do not come under any of the headings above. The source
 of the comparison ranges from jewels, furniture, and weapons of

defense to geometry and natural phenomena.

In the Lys dans la vallée we find nineteen figures referring to various kinds of cloth, thirteen to natural phenomena and there are thirteen which treat of the heart as a place :
 "La cortesse m'enveloppait dans les nourricières protections, dans les blanches draperies d'un amour tout maternel" (p. 114)⁴⁷²;
 "Leur indifférence, engendrée par les déceptions du passé, grossie des épaves limoneuses qu'il en ramenant" (p. 19)⁴⁰⁵; "Elle entre dans les derniers replis de mon cœur, un tachat d'y appliquer le sien" (p. 159)⁵⁰⁴. Other typical examples are : "A l'époque de la vie où, chez les autres hommes, les aspérités se fondent et les angles s'émoussent" (p. 216)⁵⁴⁰; "Mon amour, pris dans la religion comme une image d'argent dans du cristal" (p. 104)⁴⁶⁵; "L'avenir se meuble d'espérances" (p. 188)⁵²⁴; "Elle ouvre et ferme son cœur avec la facilité d'une mécanique anglaise" (p. 310)⁶¹¹.

The figures in the other novels are of a very similar nature:
 "Afin d'envelopper le cœur de cette pauvre mère dans un linceul brodé d'illusions" (MG. p. 369)³²⁸; "Le grain d'or que sa mère lui avait jeté au cœur, s'était étendu dans la filière parisienne" (EG. p. 141)³¹⁸; "Grandet avait observé les variations atmosphériques des créanciers" (EG. p. 167)³³⁶.

4. Group IV.

The figures in this group consist in the representation of a state or act, which is purely moral or which has moral significance, in terms of a corresponding physical circumstance or act. We are still dealing with spiritual phenomena but the point of view is more external. Also the second term of the comparison

belong to geometry and natural phenomena.

In the Iva group, we find nineteen figures refer-

ring to various kinds of cloth, thirteen to natural phenomena

and there are thirteen which treat of the heart as a place :

"La corbeille m'enveloppait dans les nonchalantes protections,

elle me faisait sentir d'un amour tout maternel" (p. 114);

"Une habitude, presque par les répétitions du geste, l'habit

des choses humaines, il en résultait" (p. 114); "Elle avait

dans les derniers replis de son cœur, un tact d'y appliquer

le sien" (p. 159). Other typical examples are : "A l'époque de la

vie où, chez les autres hommes, les sapienties se fondent et les

anglaises s'enrichissent" (p. 110); "Son amour, pris dans la religion

comme une image d'argent dans du cristal" (p. 104); "L'éveil se

sentait d'approches" (p. 144); "Elle avait de l'âme son cœur avec

la faculté d'une mécanique anglaise" (p. 310).

The figures in the other novels are of a very similar nature:

"Afin d'être sûr de ne pas se tromper dans un linéaire

probe d'illusions" (MG, p. 360); "Le grain d'or que sa mère lui

avait jeté au cœur, était étendu dans la filière parisienne"

(p. 111); "L'âme était comme les variations d'un sonnet"

des romans" (p. 111).

IV. Group IV.

The figures in this group consist in the representation of a state or act which is purely moral or which has moral significance, in terms of a corresponding physical circumstance or act. We are still dealing with spiritual phenomena but the point of view is more external. Also the second term of the comparison

comes nearer being purely symbolical, and the figures when developed take on somewhat the appearance of a parable.

Rather than make a separate group, I place here the few figures dealing with pure abstracts. As a rule the abstract quality is expressed in concrete terms only when it is related to a human being, in which case it really represents a moral state.

In the Lys dans la vallée about half of the figures are the development of the conception of life as a journey, with the two details of abîme and désert standing out prominently: "A m'avancer jusqu'au bord des précipices, à sonder le gouffre du mal, à en interroger le fond, en sentir le froid, et me retirer tout ému" (p. 196)⁵³⁰; "Après être descendu dans l'abîme d'où elle put voir encore le ciel" (p. 52)⁴³⁵; "Je soupçonnai un malheur comme lorsqu'en marchant sur les voûtes d'une cave les pieds en ont en quelque sort la conscience de la profondeur" (p. 56)⁴²⁷; "Cet immense malheur déroulant ses savanes épineuses à chaque difficulté vaincue" (p. 88)⁴⁵⁴; Dans ce grand naufrage, j'apercevais une île où je pouvais aborder" (p. 344)⁶²⁵; "Voyez par quelles voies nous avons marché l'un vers l'autre; quel aimant nous a dirigés sur l'océan des eaux amères, vers la source d'eau douce, coulant au pied des monts sur un sable pailleté entre deux rives vertes et fleuries" (p. 93)⁴⁵⁸; "Cette pensée m'éleva soudain à des hauteurs éthérées. Je me retrouvai dans le ciel des mes anciens songes" (p. 99)⁴⁶²; "Elle avait habité comme un palais sombre en craignant d'entrer en de somptueux appartements où brillaient des lumières" (p. 179)⁵²⁵; "Je fouille ce monceau de cendres et prends plaisir à les étaler devant vous" (p. 329)⁶⁴⁷; "Les étendards de la mort qui flottaient sur cette créature" (p. 332)⁶³⁰.

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Rather than make a separate group, I place here the few fig-
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human being, in which case it really represents a moral state.

In the live state is raised about half of the figures are the

development of the conception of life as a journey, with the two
details of going and returning out prominently: "A journeyer

journeyer, a journeyer, a journeyer is journeying to meet, an in-
terpreter is found, an interpreter is found, an interpreter is found" (p. 198)

"Après être descendu dans l'abîme d'un être qui voit encore le
ciel" (p. 199); "Le voyageur en chemin croit toujours le voyageur

sur les routes d'une vie en route en route en route en route en route
à l'abîme de la mort" (p. 200); "Cet homme est toujours le voyageur

sur les routes d'une vie en route en route en route en route en route
à l'abîme de la mort" (p. 201); "Cet homme est toujours le voyageur

sur les routes d'une vie en route en route en route en route en route
à l'abîme de la mort" (p. 202); "Cet homme est toujours le voyageur

sur les routes d'une vie en route en route en route en route en route
à l'abîme de la mort" (p. 203); "Cet homme est toujours le voyageur

sur les routes d'une vie en route en route en route en route en route
à l'abîme de la mort" (p. 204); "Cet homme est toujours le voyageur

sur les routes d'une vie en route en route en route en route en route
à l'abîme de la mort" (p. 205); "Cet homme est toujours le voyageur

sur les routes d'une vie en route en route en route en route en route
à l'abîme de la mort" (p. 206); "Cet homme est toujours le voyageur

Similarly for Un ménage de garçon, "Florence éprouvait la sensation d'une femme tombée au fond d'une précipice, elle ne voyait que ténèbres dans son avenir, et sur ces ténèbres se dessinaient, comme dans un lointain profond, des choses monstrueuses, indistinctement aperçues et qui l'épouvantaient. Elle sentait le froid humide des souterrains" (p. 316); "Il n'aurait pas si promptement son capital d'existence" (p. 129); "Cette enfant qu'il dégrasait" (p. 187); "Qu'il jouât, par pitié, la comédie d'une tendresse quelconque" (p. 328); "Repugnances pour le vase amer de la science" (p. 187).

The figures in Eugénie Grandet present the same types: "la femme ... reste face à face avec le chagrin dont rien ne la distraît, elle descend jusqu'au fond de l'abîme qu'il a ouvert, le mesure, et souvent le comble de ses vœux et de ses larmes" (p. 339); "A quitter ses pensées tristes, à s'élancer avec elle dans les champs de l'espérance et de l'avenir, où elle aimait à s'engager avec lui" (p. 301).

The figures in this class are the result of a very common process of figurative creation; and the analogies between spiritual experiences and, ^{employed by Balzac} ~~which Balzac uses~~, physical experiences, have in most cases become stereotyped, and it is more difficult to arrive at real originality by reworking the ideas. With Balzac a pretentious expression of these banal conceptions often produces a ludicrous, mock-heroic impression.

5. Group V.

This group includes the comparison between two acts, usually purely physical, but always belonging to the same sphere: that is

entirely for the purpose of "showing" the same
 tion d'un terme tombée au fond d'une précipice, elle ne voyait que
 ténérès dans son avenir, et sur ces ténérès se désolant,
 comme dans un certain nombre, les choses sont, indistinctes
 rendent et lui l'épouvante. The result is that in-
 rite les contraires" (p. 152) "l'avenir est si incertainement son
 capital d'existence" (p. 152); "l'avenir d'un homme" (p. 152)
 (p. 151); "ou, il faut, par pitié, la comédie d'une tendresse
 d'existence" (p. 152); "l'existence est si incertainement son
 (p. 151)

The figures in Enfer present the same types: "la
 femme ... reste face à face avec le chagrin dont rien ne la dis-
 trait, elle descend jusqu'au fond de l'abîme qu'il a ouvert, le
 mesure, et souvent le compte de ses vœux et de ses larmes" (p. 150).
 "A d'autres ses pensées tristes, s'élancer avec elle dans les
 champs de l'existence et de l'avenir, on elle aîné à s'engager
 avec lui" (p. 151).

The figures in this class are the result of a very common
 process of figurative creation; and the analysis between sym-
 bolical experiences and, when failed, physical experiences
 have in most cases become stereotyped, and it is more difficult
 to arrive at real originality by reworking the ideas. With
 failure a stereotyped expression of these general conceptions often
 produces a ludicrous, mock-heroic impression.

5. Group V.

This group includes the comparison between two acts, usually
 partly physical, but always belonging to the same sphere: that is

physical is compared to physical and intellectual to intellectual. The figures are too diversified to be classified, and their creation indicates no great originality. The professions serve most frequently as source for the comparisons, in particular drama, war, finance, and law.

"Criminelles selon la jurisprudence des grands ames" (p. 301^{LV. 604}); "Crimes de lèse-amour" (LV. p. 301⁶⁰⁴); "Mot qui n'était pas encore monnayé" (LV. p. 49⁴²⁶); "Cette veuve, dont le deuil fut orné de quelque galanteries" (MG. p. 399³¹⁸); "Ils semblait se désigner le dessert comme le champ de bataille" (MG. p. 180¹⁹⁴); "Dans trois jours devaient commencer une terrible action, une tragédie bourgeoise sans poison, ni poignard, ni sang répandu; mais relativement aux acteurs plus cruelle que tous les drames accomplis dans l'illustre famille des Atrides" (EG. p. 173³⁴¹); "Endimanchés jusqu'aux dents" (EG. p. 118³⁰¹); "L'assemblée se remue en masse et fit un quart de conversion vers le feu" (EG. p. 47²⁵¹); "En tenant jusqu'au dernier soupir les rênes de ses millions" (EG. p. 201³⁶⁰); "Tous les instruments aratoires dont se sert un jeune oisif pour labourer la vie" (EG. p. 43²⁴⁸); "La ville entière le mit pour ainsi dire hors la loi, se souvint de ses trahisons, de ses duretés, et l'excommunié" (EG. p. 191³⁵³).

We find here also the tendency to render the idea more concrete and definite, either by introducing more of the element of physical force or by substituting a specific act for an habit or plan of action.

6. Group VI.

In the Lys dans la vallée there are fifteen comparisons between objects of a very similar nature: natural objects to natural

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between objects of a very similar nature: natural objects to which
In the data is valid there are fifteen comparisons be-

objects and manufactured objects to manufactured: "La rivière fut comme un sentier sur lequel nous volions" (p. 225)⁵⁴⁷; "Le pluie incessante du pollen, beau nuage qui papillote dans l'air" (p. 126)⁸⁰; "Ces résidus de porc sautés dans ^{aa} les graisses et qui ressemblent a des truffes cuites" (p. 7)³⁹⁷. Here I have placed also one comparison between animals: L'hirondelle du désert [horse]^{de} - (p. 257)⁵⁷³. A castle is compared once to a flower (p. 33)⁴¹⁷; the rest of the comparisons are of natural objects to the creations of human arts - music, poetry, jewelry, cloth, architecture: "Ce poème de fleurs lumineuses qui bourdonnent incessamment ses mélodies au coeur" (p. 126)⁴⁸¹; "Les tremblements de la lune dans les pierreries de la rivière" (p. 75)⁴⁴⁴; "Ces jolis jours qui ressemblent à des soirées peintes" [effect of light and shadow] - (p. 102)⁴⁶⁴; "Une longue allée de forêt semblable à quelque nef de cathédrale, où les arbres sont des piliers, où les branches forment les arceaux de la voûte, au bout de laquelle une clairière lointaine aux jours mêlées d'ombres ou nuancés par les teintes rouges du couchant poind à travers les feuilles et montre comme les vitraux colorés d'un choeur plein d'oiseaux qui chantent" (p. 123)⁴⁷⁸.

In Un ménage de garçon the comparisons are between objects of very similar external appearance for the purpose of more accurate description. The effect is usually pejorative: "Un chapeau... découpé comme une feuille de chou sur laquelle auraient vécu plusieurs chenilles... Sa méchante veste ressemblait à un morceau de tapisserie" (p. 166)¹⁸⁴; "Il n'abandonnait son col de satin qu'au moment où il ressemblait à la beurre" (75)¹¹⁹; "Le bouilli dissequé par M. Hochon en tranches semblables à des semelles d'escarpins" (p. 224)²²³; "Ruisseaux qui... ressemblent à des rubans d'argent au milieu d'une

objects and manufactured objects to manufacture: "la rivière
 fut comme un sentier sur lequel nous volions" (p. 124); "le ruis-
 seau de la rivière, dans sa course, avait l'air d'un sentier
 d'un résidu de porc sauté dans le gras et qui rassemblait
 les petites choses" (p. 125). "Here I have placed also the comparison
 between animals: l'animalité du regard (p. 125). A castle
 is compared once to a flower (p. 125); the rest of the comparisons
 are of natural objects to the creation of human arts - music,
 poetry, jewelry, cloth, architecture: "ce royaume de l'homme, l'homme
 qui pourment l'homme, les choses qui se font en l'homme" (p. 125); "les
 fragments de la lune dans les rivières de la rivière" (p. 125);
 "ces jolis jours qui rassemblent à des soirs peints" (p. 125);
 of light and shadow - (p. 125); "the things alive in forest, the things
 a distance not of cathedrals, on les arbres sont des piliers, on les
 branches forment les arceaux de la voûte, au bout de laquelle une
 lumière lointaine aux jours meilleurs d'arbres on voyait
 les feuilles rouges du couchant point à travers les feuilles et
 montre comme les vitraux colorés d'un choeur plein d'oiseaux
 qui chantent" (p. 125).

In the metaphor of comparison and metaphor of objects of
 very similar external appearance for the purpose of more accurate
 description. The effect is usually pejorative: "un chapeau...
 découpe comme une feuille de chou sur laquelle s'élevait avec pin-
 cles et ciseaux... sa robe verte ressemblait à un morceau de
 tapisserie" (p. 126); "Il n'abandonnait son col de satin qu'un mo-
 ment et il ressemblait à la pierre" (p. 126); "le fouille d'acier par
 le frottement et les choses se ressemblent à des choses d'acier" (p. 126);
 "l'oiseau qui... ressemblait à des choses d'acier" (p. 126).

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~~une~~ robe verte"(p.153). The figures in Eugénie Grandet resemble rather those of Un ménage de garçon; their effect is frequently comical rather than really descriptive: "Sa vieille montre... qui ressemblait à un vaisseau hollandais"(p.39)²⁴⁶; "Les huit marches ...étaient disjointes et ensevelies sous de hautes plantes comme le tombeau d'un chevalier entermé par sa veuve au temps des croisades"(p.18)²⁶⁶; "Un bûcher où le bois était rangé avec autant d'exactitude que peuvent l'être les livres d'un bibliothécaire"(p.67)^{phile 266}.

The figures in this group, especially those that have no poetical pretention, are usually well chosen. They give a rather definite picture of the object in question and also suggest the impression that the author wishes us to receive from the object itself and from the person with whom the object is associated.

Group VI, B

Under this heading I have included all personifications and all animation of inanimate objects.

The Lys dans la vallée contains two comparisons of inanimate objects to animals, one personification of a part of the body, two of insects, and five of buildings: "La note unique du rossignol des eaux"(p.63)⁴³⁶; "Les moulins... donnaient une voix à cette vallée frémissante"(p.82)⁴¹¹. There are fourteen personifications of nature: "Une bryère fleurie, convertie des diamants de la rosée qui la trempe, et dans laquelle se joue le soleil, immensité parée pour un seul regard qui s'y jette à propos"(p.122)⁴⁷⁸; "Des touffes blanches... Vague image des formes souhaitées, roulées comme celles d'une esclave soumise"(p.125)⁴⁸⁰. Seven figures present flowers as representing the thoughts and emotions of man: "Ce proluxe torrent d'amour "[bouquet]"(p.126)⁴⁸⁰; "Des tiges tourmentées comme les desirs entortillées au fond de l'âme"(p.126)⁴⁸⁰. With a great many of these last

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...étaient disjointes et enlevées sous de hautes plantes comme
 le tombeau d'un chevalier enterré par sa venue au temps des croi-
 sades" (p. 125); "un bucher ou le bois était rangé avec autant d'ex-
 actitude que le ciment l'estre les livres d'un bibliothécaire" (p. 127).
 The figures in this group especially those that have no post-
 ical protection, are usually well chosen. They give a rather bet-
 ter picture of the object in question and also suggest the im-
 pression that the author wishes us to receive from the object it-
 self and from the person with whom the object is associated.

Group VI, F.

Under this heading I have included all personifications and
 all animation of inanimate objects.
 The l'âme de la pierre contains two comparisons of inanimate
 objects to animals, one personification of a part of the body, two
 of insects, and five of buildings: "la note unique du rosignol"
 des arbres" (p. 123); "les colonnes... A l'instar des veils d'une statue
 d'ivoire" (p. 124). There are fourteen personifications of nature
 "une première fleur, convertie des diamants de la rosée qui la
 frappe, et dans laquelle se joue le soleil, illuminée par son ray-
 on" (p. 122); "une fleur blanche...
 vague image des formes sculptées, blanches comme celles d'une sa-
 crée statue" (p. 125). Seven figures present flowers as represent-
 ing the thoughts and emotions of man: "les fleurs forment l'âme"
 d'un homme" (p. 124); "des fleurs blanches comme les traits d'un
 visage au fond de l'âme" (p. 124). With a great many of these last

twenty one figures, it is hard to decide whether they belong here or in groups I and III; for instance the last seven all have to do with the bouquets by which Felix expresses his love to Madame de Mortsauf, where in the figures of speech he is simply retranslating the flower language into the original. We are in fact dealing with a secret code rather than with figurative creation. Considering the number of comparisons of women and passions to flowers, this reverse process of the personification is, however, very natural. The two concepts have become almost identical and either may be substituted for the other.

The personifications in the other two novels are, as a whole, decidedly commonplace. In Un ménage de garçon the effect is usually comical. In Eugénie Grandet six personify the house and furniture: "Ce terne allait avoir vingt et un ans, il atteignait à sa majorité" (M 120 (EG.p.77)); "L'insulte faite à l'opposition constitutionnelle et au libéralisme dans la personne du sacro-saint journal" (MG.p.145); "En 1806, bien des paroisses en France étaient encore veuves" (MG.p.173); "La maison Grandet reprit sa physionomie pour tout le monde" (EG.p.170); "Les murs épais présentaient leur chemise verte" (EG.p.68); "Un marteau lui... frappait sur la tête grimaçante d'un maître clou" (EG.p.12); "Le bruit que chaque feuille produisait dans cette cour sonore en se détachant de son rameau donnait une réponse aux secrètes interrogations de la jeune fille" (EG.p.69). Real personification, then, plays an almost negligible part in Balzac's profuse description of inanimate objects.

twenty one figures, it is hard to decide whether they belong here or in Groups I and III; for instance the last seven all have to do with the bondnets by which Felix expresses his love to Madame de Morsant, where in the figures of speech he is simply retranslating the flowerlanguage into the original. We are in fact dealing with a secret code rather than with figurative creation. Considering the number of variations of words and phrases in flower-are, this reverse process of the personification is, however, very natural. The two concepts have become almost identical and either may be substituted for the other.

The personifications in the other two novels are, as a whole, decidedly commonplace. In Le roman expérimental the effect is usually comical. In Le roman expérimental six personify the house and furniture: "ce terme allait avoir vingt et un ans, il atteignait sa majorité" (p. 174); "l'immense table à l'opposition constitutionnelle et au libéralisme dans la personne du sacro-saint fourneau" (p. 175); "un bon vieux fourneau en France était une chose connue" (p. 175); "la maison grandit rapidement pour tout le monde" (p. 176); "les murs étaient présentement fourrés de verbe" (p. 176); "un maître en... frappait sur la tête l'incassable d'un maître clon" (p. 176); "le bruit que chaque famille produisait dans cette cour sonore en se détachant de son trépas donnait une réponse aux secrètes interrogations de la jeune fille" (p. 176). Real personification, then, plays an important part in Balzac's precise description of inanimate objects.

RHETORICAL ANALYSIS OF THE FIGURES

Sufficient examples ^{have been} ~~are~~ given in the above analysis to suggest the main characteristics of the figures of Balzac. In the first place the comparisons result from intellectually conceived rather than external similarities; there are comparatively few figures based on form and color, and even fewer in ^{where} ~~which~~ these two properties alone dictate the choice of the comparison. There is a strong ulterior motive in such comparisons as that of a man's face to a skimmer, fresh butter, or a wrinkled garment, and in the expressions of external similarities between man and animals. On the whole, ^{the} most frequent effect of the figures is to give concrete expression to abstract conceptions: ^{the indicates an imagination} ~~is really susceptible to physical impressions with marked tendency toward the subjective.~~ Metaphors naturally predominate, being a more normal form of expression; there is, however, a considerable proportion of formal similes, frequently developed along Virgilian lines. A single comparison is often prolonged by a series of similes and metaphors and repeated time after time throughout the book, so that, in spite of the great number of figures, the number of objects from which they are drawn is really not particularly large.

As we have already indicated, there is an intimate relation between the type of figures and the character of the novel; in other words Balzac renders the figures of speech an efficient auxiliary in the presentation of his dominating ideas. If we except the greater part of the poetical figures, we find that, though the rest may shock our aesthetic sense, they give a strikingly vivid impression of the character or object in question. This is especially true in groups I, A, B, and D; group V, and group VI, A where

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the figures closely follow conventional lines. But even where the figures seem to convey clearly the idea of Balzac, the impression left by them is not altogether pleasing; and their analysis from a rhetorical and aesthetic point of view reveals more to blame than to praise.

Probably the most general fault is related to the tendency to exaggeration which finds expression in various elements of Balzac's novels: the characters, bank accounts, hyperboles, and broad generalizations. There is much color heightening by means of figures. This is not necessarily a defect, for a certain amount of exaggeration can be justified artistically in any phase of literary creation; as to how much can be used to good effect, it is impossible to fix a standard, for it depends on the reader, the natural bent of his mind, and the degree of assimilation of his own ideas to those of the author. Here we find an intimation as to why the estimates of Balzac's work as a whole, or of single works such as the Lys dans la vallée, have varied so widely at different periods and with different individuals.

In Eugénie Grandet the most pretentious figures grow out of the effort to magnify the import of this tragedie bourgeoise, so commonplace in appearance, which Balzac wills to interpret as surpassing the terrible and thrilling dramas enacted in the family of the Atrides. The intrigues for the hand of Eugénie are likened to the struggles of the Medici and Pazzi at Florence; Eugénie shows more courage, when she replaces the sugar on the table before the eyes of her father, than the woman who sustains with bleeding hands a shaken ladder whereby her lover is escaping. Here the figure is pretentious; for a commonplace act is compared to a grandiose one; but as expressed there is really no

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In *Eugenie Grandet* the most pretentious figures grow out of the effort to realize the effect of this financial bourgeoisie, so commonplace in appearance, which Balzac wishes to interpret as suffering the terrible and thrilling dramas enacted in the family of the Atides. The intrigues for the hand of Eugenie are likened to the struggles of the Medici and Farnesi at Florence; Eugenie shows more courage when she replaces the sugar on the table before the eyes of her father, than the women who sustain with bleeding hands a shaken ladder whereby her lover is escaping. Here the figure is pretentious: but a commonplace act is compared to a grandiose one; but as expressed there is really no art.

exaggeration. Un ménage de garçon contains exaggerations of power and importance, as when Flore under the domination of Philippe is likened to France in the hands of Napoleon; but exaggeration here is usually in the direction of excessive materialism, which will be the subject of a later discussion.

The above mentioned pretentious figures we can accept with a smile at the conscious or unconscious irony of the author; but in the Lys dans la vallée the effort to idealize, which appears only sporadically in Eugénie Grandet, produces solid masses, as it were, of pretentious poetical figures, which become insipid from their very number and from their character. Nearly all the comparisons to religious emotions, to saints, martyrs, and the like, come under this head; while the comparisons to flowers, fluids, and flames offend by the manner of expression rather than by the basal idea. A single short paragraph containing six distinct figures will serve to illustrate this point :

"Je lui contai mon enfance et ma jeunesse, non comme je vous l'ai dite, en la jugeant à distance, mais avec les paroles ardentes du jeune homme de qui les blessures saignent encore. Ma voix retentit comme la hache des bûcherons dans une forêt. Devant elle tombèrent à grande bruit les années mortes, les longues douleurs qui les avaient hérissées de branches sans feuillages. Je lui peignis avec des mots enfiévrés une foule de détails terribles, dont je vous ai fait grâce. J'étais le trésor de mes vœux brillants, l'or vierge de mes desirs, tout un cœur brûlant conserve sous les glaces de ces alpes entassées par un continuel hiver. Lorsque, courbé sous les poids de mes souffrances redites avec les charbons d'Isaïe, j'attendis un mot de cette femme qui m'écoutait la tête baissée, elle éclaira les ténèbres par un regard,

exaggeration. Moreover, the author's exaggerations of power and importance, as when he writes under the domination of this type is likened to France in the hands of Napoleon; but exaggeration here is usually in the direction of excessive materialism, which will be the subject of a later discussion.

The above mentioned pretentious figures we can accept with a smile at the conscious or unconscious irony of the author; but in the first place, the effort to idealize, which appears only superficially in the first part, becomes self-assured, as it were, of pretentious poetical figures, which become insipid from their very number and from their character. Nearly all the comparisons to religious emotions, to saints, martyrs, and the like, come under this head; while the comparisons to flowers, birds, and flames of-fered by the manner of expression rather than by the basic idea. A single short paragraph containing six distinct figures will

serve to illustrate this point :

"Je lui contai mon enfance et ma jeunesse, non comme je vous l'ai dite, en la regardant à distance, mais avec les paroles échangées du jeune homme de qui les blessures aiguisent encore. Ma voix retentit comme la hache des moineaux dans une forêt. Je sentais à grands traits les années mortes, les longues douleurs qui les avaient hachées de branches sans feuillages. Je lui parlais avec des mots enlaidis par une foule de détails terribles, dont je vous ai fait grâce. J'étais le trésor de mes vœux brillants, l'or vierge de mes desirs, tout un océan brillant conservé sous les glaces de ces alpes entassées par un continuel hiver. Lorsque, courbé sous les poids de mes souffrances redites avec les charbons d'Israël, j'attendais un mot de cette femme qui m'écou-rait la tête baissée, elle éclairait les ténèbres par un regard,

elle anima les mondes terrestres et divins par un seul mot"(p.85).

When the conception is banal, a pretentious elaboration is all the more disagreeable and the figure becomes pure verbiage worthy of the précieuses : "Vous m'avez naguère dirigé sagement à travers les voies périlleuses du grand monde"(LV.p.218); "Ce trésor englouti dans les eaux dormantes de l'oubli"(LV.p.453). "Ce regard nouillé...comme un éternel joyau dont les feux brillent aux jours difficiles"(LV.p.452); "Nos âmes, qui, pour ainsi dire, entraient l'une chez l'autre sans obstacle, mais sans y être conviées par le baiser"(LV.p.118); "Renversant le pompeux édifice élevé par sa préférence maternelle"(MG.p.364); "Drapé sur son lit de mort dans le manteau de la philosophie encyclopédiste"(MG.p.174); "L'amour vrai, l'amour des anges, l'amour fier qui vit de sa douleur et qui en meurt"(EG.p.382); "Colifichets de dandy...tous les instruments aratoires dont se sert un jeune oisif pour labourer la vie"(EG.p.248).

The prime requisite of a figure of speech is that it should be apt, that it should be suitable to the thing compared. If there is no external resemblance between the two objects, or if the two concepts are not associated in our minds so that they can produce similar intellectual or emotional reactions, the figure is unjustifiable. The effort to magnify the import of the subject under discussion naturally leads the author to compare it to something with which it is incompatible; thus many of the inexact, absurd, and meaningless figures are the result of some form of pretention. The comparison of Félix drinking the tears of Madame de Mortsauf to a man taking the Holy Communion would be revolting if the comparison were not so incongruous as to be ridiculous. The comparisons to flowers, fluids, and flames have in general no very

elle anime les mondes terrestres et divins par un seul mot" (p. 85).
 When the conception is partial, a pretentious elaboration is
 all the more disagreeable and the figure becomes pure verbiage
 worthy of the pedagogue: "Venez à nous, nous sommes là, nous sommes
 à portée de vos vœux, nous sommes à portée de vos vœux" (p. 85); "ce
 trésor englouti dans les eaux dormantes de l'oubli" (p. 85).
 "ce regard ravivé... comme un étroit regard dont les yeux brillent
 aux jours difficiles" (p. 85); "nos yeux, oui, pour étaler, pour
 présenter l'une chez l'autre sans obstacle, mais sans y être con-
 vains par le balais" (p. 85); "renversant le compas d'édifice
 d'un pas sa préférence matérielle" (p. 85); "l'ère sur son lit
 de mort dans le canton de la philosophie encyclopédique" (p. 85).
 "L'homme vital, l'homme des anges, l'homme fier qui vit de sa douleur
 et qui se sent" (p. 85); "difficultés de l'âme... tous les in-
 stants spirituels dont se sent un jeune d'élite tout laborieux in-
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 to a man taking the holy communion would be revolting if the com-
 parison were not so incongruous as to be ridiculous. The com-
 parison of flowers, fluids, and flames have in general no very

distinct meaning, and when we are told that the mournful tones of Madame de Mortsauf exhaled an odor like that of cut (decaying?) flowers (LV, p. ⁵⁷³258), we are at a loss to relate the two ideas even emotionally. Other examples of questionable clearness and aptness are; "Ma chair laissée en lambeaux dans ^Sdon cœur" (LV, p. ¹⁰⁴160); "Un visage où les ailes du plaisir avaient semé leur poussière diaprée" (LV, p. ⁶⁰⁵302); "Son corps ignore la sueur, il aspire le feu dans l'atmosphère et vit dans l'eau sous peine de ne pas vivre" (LV, p. ⁵⁶⁸250). More external is the incongruity in such expression as: "Une femme...se posa près de moi par un mouvement d'oiseau qui s'abat sur son nid" (LV, p. ⁴⁰⁸22); "Je suis jalouse! dit-elle avec un accent d'exaltation qui ressemblait au coup de tonnerre d'un orage qui passe" (LV, p. ⁴⁵⁷22).

Two examples of improper comparison from Eugénie Grandet are: "[Mortsauf] plantée sur ses pieds comme une chêne de soixante ans sur ses racines" (EG, p. ²³⁴22); "Le bonhomme sauta sur le nécessaire comme un tigre fond sur un enfant endormi" (EG, ³⁶¹201). The first figure is rendered incongruous by the mention of roots; as for the second, if a tiger should attack a sleeping child at all, it would not be in the manner that the passage suggests. When Balzac adds endormi, he is forgetting for the moment his figure in the desire to emphasize the helplessness of Eugénie.

The impropriety in the figures of Balzac comes largely from the fact that they are too physical, too materialistic for the thing compared. This is especially true of the Lys dans la vallée while in Un ménage de garçon, where everything is placed on a materialistic basis, the figures fit in very naturally, though occasionally the limit seems to be overstepped: "Une femme, verte

distinct meaning, and when we are told that the word "tiger" has a
 meaning of "tiger" (deceitful) (deceitful) (deceitful) (deceitful)
 Flowers (IV. p. 252), we are at a loss to relate the two ideas even
 emotionally. Other examples of questionable clearness and apt-
 ness are: "Ma chair laisse en l'air sans son cou" (IV. p. 160);
 "un visage on les ailes du plaisir avaient semé leur poussière
 dispersée" (IV. p. 202); "son corps ignore la sève, il aspire la sève"
 dans l'atmosphère et vit dans l'eau sans peine de ne pas vivre"
 (IV. p. 207). More external is the incongruity in such expressions
 as: "une femme... se pose près de moi par un mouvement d'oiseau"
 and "what son nida" (IV. p. 22); "Je suis jalouse; dis-elle"
 avec un accent d'exaltation qui ressemblait au coup de tonnerre
 d'un orage en hiver (IV. p. 23).
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comme une noyée de deux jours"(MG.p.³³³376). In the Lys dans la
vallée, however, the all-pervasive materialism of the figures
 is displeasing, almost revolting, by contrast with the evident
 purpose of idealizing. When Felix seeks in the heart of his moth-
 er "des endroits friables" where he can attach "quelques rameaux
 d'affection"(LV.p.⁴⁰⁵12), when he speaks of a woman as "séchée sur
 sur tige, faute de sève"(LV.p.⁵²⁵129), or when he compares Madame de
 Mortsauf to a worm-eaten fruit that is nearing the stage of pu-
 trification, he is far from the realm of poetic impressions. Eugé-
nie Grandet presents a measured use of expressions of materialism
 in its crudest forms. "Un nez...flavescent à l'état normal, mais
 rouge apres les repas, espèce de phénomène végétal"(EG.p.³⁷⁶223) and
 "La joie sembla s'échapper comme une fumée par les crevasses
 de son brun visage"(EG.p.³⁷⁹227) are not exactly pleasing to our
 sensibilities, but they are in accord with the character, and with
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The continued expression of the abstract by the concrete pre-
 duces an impression of materialism. Such comparisons, used with
 discretion, could be made, however, to produce extremely poetic ef-
 fects; the fault with Balzac's figures is that they insist too
 much on the similarities, they introduce details that spoil the
 poetic suggestion. This can be exemplified by cases where a single
 word added spoils the figure. We can form a vague conception of
 thoughts flooding the soul like waves, but when we are told that
 they "jaillissent écumeuses"(LV.p.⁴⁸¹127), our imagination balks. It
 is very well that the soul should bathe in pleasure, but it is hard
 to conceive of its being "refraîchie sur toutes ses surfaces, ca-
 ressée dans ses plis les plus profonds"(LV.⁴⁷³115). Similarly after

comme une noyée de deux jours" (IV. p. 376). In the live days is
valued, however, the all-pervasive materialism of the figures
is disquieting, almost revolting, by contrast with the evident
purpose of idealizing. When Felix seeks in the heart of his mother
er "des entités triables" where he can attach "quelques rameaux
d'affection" (IV. p. 382), when he speaks of a woman as "sèche et
sur life, l'âme de sève" (IV. p. 389), or when he compares Madame de
Mortsaun to a worm-eaten fruit that is nearing the stage of pu-
trification, he is far from the realm of poetic impressions. When
his grandeur presents a measured use of expressions of materialism
in its crudest forms. "Un nez... l'évanescent d'un nez normal, mais
dans une vieillesse" (IV. p. 383).
"La joie semblait s'échapper comme une fumée par les évasées
de son bon visage" (IV. p. 387) are noticeably pleasing to our
sensibilities, but they are in accord with the character, and with
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word added spoils the figure. We can form a vague conception of
thoughts flooding the soul like waves, but when we are told that
they "s'écoulaient comme une mer" (IV. p. 387), our imagination fails. It
is very well that the soul should bathe in pleasure, but it is hard
to conceive of its being "réfractile aux lentes des surfaces, es-
sées dans ses plus profonds" (IV. 415). Similarly after

a long comparison of Madame de Mortsaulf to a bit of heather near the Villa Diolati, Balzac adds: "Son corps avait le verdeur que nous admirons dans les feuilles nouvellement dépliées" (LV. r. ⁴²¹41). "Un teint cuivré, verdi de place en place" (MG. p. ²⁶⁹286) offers an interesting example, in which copper complexion suggested the idea of the green corrosion seen so often on copper vessels.

Finally we have figures which do not accord with themselves. The incoherence is largely attributable to exuberance of imagination. From the multitude of images that arise in his mind, Balzac does not choose; he adds them one after the other in such quick succession that they frequently overlap. We may define a mixed or incoherent figure as one in which two or more incompatible images are evoked to represent the same object or concept. In order that such a figure may be permissible, it is not sufficient that the figurative expression^s should be commonplace; all but one of them must lose entirely the power of producing an image. Until then a sort of intellectual wrench is necessary in order to grasp the meaning, a process which is especially disagreeable to the French mind, with its love of fitness and exactness. In the following examples the incoherence is comparatively unobtrusive: "Enivré d'ambition par cette femme, Charles avait caresse, pendant la traversée, toutes ces espérances, qui lui furent présentée par une main habile et sous forme de confidences versées de cœur à cœur" (FG. p. ²⁷⁷224); "Une teinte de pitié passionnée qui versé dans l'âme de son enfant chérie la lumière de l'amour céleste" (LV. p. ⁴³⁴60); "Nos âmes étalent en proie à ces volveversements qui les sillonnent de manière à y laisser d'éternelles empreintes" (LV. p. ⁴⁶⁶169). Each figure, however, presents three or more ideas that do not

a long comparison of Madame de Mantes to a bit of pebble near
admirable dans les familles nouvellement dépeintes (IV. p. 101). "The
teint olive, verd de place en place" (M. p. 101) offers an inter-
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trusive: "Envie d'ambition par cette femme, Charles avait cessé
pendant la traversée, toutes ces espérances, qui lui furent présentées
par une main habile, et sous forme de confidences versées de cour-
toisie" (IV. p. 101). "Une scène de cette nature ne peut être
l'une de son enfant chérie la lumière de l'amour céleste" (IV. p. 101).
"Nos âmes étaient en proie à ces bouleversements qui les allon-
nent de manière à laisser d'éternelles empreintes" (IV. p. 101).
Each figure, however, presents three or more ideas that do not

harmonize, as for instance en proie, bouleversements, sillonnent, and empreintes. More external is the confusion of an arrow and a shot in "Jamais cet homme n'avait manqué de lui décocher une fleche au coeur. Oiseau sublime atteint dans son vol par ce grossier grain de plomb, elle tomba." (EG. p. 196). "Tu ne connaissais pas ton oncle, pourquoi pleures-tu? lui dit son pere en lui lançant un de ses regards de tigre affamé qu'il jetait sans doute a tas d'or" (EG. p. 32). lacks aptness as well as coherence; the glance of an angry father, of a hungry tiger, and of a miser before his gold can be hardly be assimilated into a single concept. The most marked tendency in the Lys dans la vallée is to fuse the various conceptions noted in group III, as when Felix speaks of Madame de Mortsau as "cette fleur sidérale" (LV. p. 437). Other examples are: "Pour aspirer l'air qui sortait de sa levre chargé de son âme, pour étreindre cette lumière, parlée avec l'ardeur que j'aurais mise à serrer la comtesse sur mon sein" (LV. p. 419); "Je sentis un farfum de femme qui brilla dans mon ame comme y brilla depuis la poésie orientale" (LV. p. 408). Mme. de Mortsau's speech is air surcharged with her soul, it is a light, yet at the same time Felix embraces it as he would the woman herself.

In the light of what has been said, we may analyse certain phases of the intellectual process by which Balzac creates his figures. The continual repetition of practically the same figure would indicate that, in addition to the figures resulting from a spontaneous operation of the imagination, there are others that grow up out of a preconceived notion of similarity. It is in this last class that the most salient faults occur, resulting from an imperfect analysis of the relations between the two terms of the

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In the light of what has been said, we may analyze certain phe-

comparisons. The human consciousness crowded with concepts is like a sheet of paper on which thousands of overlapping circles of all sizes have been drawn. To make a perfect comparison, one must see in just how far the two concepts coincide and admit nothing in the expression of the figure of speech that forces him outside of the common territory; an artistic figure is one in which the reader does not perceive that the author has overstepped the limits.

Balzac who frequently ^{uses} writes concepts that really are related by very unessential traits, that have little common territory, oversteps the limit in both directions. We have already noted, in speaking of figures that are not apt, that he forces a figure in order to make it better suit the idea which he wishes to present. (1) Similarly he tends to add to the figure something that may refer directly to the first term but is out of place as applied to the second. Thus in the tiger-boas comparison of Grandet, the last word méthodique refers to Grandet rather than to the serpent. In "Elle tremblait de laisser cette brebis (Eugénie), blanche comme elle, ~~se~~ seule au milieu d'un monde égoïste qui voulait lui arracher sa toison, ses trésors" (FG. p. 286), ³⁶⁴ trésors refers to Eugénie and not to the lamb. From such expressions, which arise from the desire to express everything, it is but a step to mixed metaphor; if the mind reverts back too strongly to the literal sense, it may reexpress it by an entirely different figure. But it is usually in the other direction that the mind of Balzac is directed. He loses sight of his original idea and develops the figure for its own sake.

(1) See ^{as an example} page 36

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"Son désir va comme le tourbillon du désert, le désert dont l'ardente immensité se peint dans ses yeux, le désert plein d'azur et d'amour, avec son ciel inaltérable, avec ses fraîches nuits étoilées"(LV.p.⁵⁶⁸251); "Henriette était l'oiseau chantant ses poèmes orientaux dans son bocage au bord du Gange, et, comme une pierrie vivante, volant de branche en branche parmi les roses d'un immense volkaméria toujours fleurie"(LV.p.⁵⁵⁶233). More especially in the cases we have noted of over emphasis of the materialism, it seems that the image has entirely replaced the original idea in the mind of Balzac. Indeed he ^{often} fuses in such a way the figurative and the literal that we are inclined frequently to believe that he loses the capacity of distinguishing between the two, that he uses the figures without being conscious that he is departing from the normal speech.

The figures indicate also the lack of such critical sense as would naturally belong to a man working more soberly, without such feverish enthousiasm or inspiration of creation; a critical spirit that would restrain his natural tendencies, correct the patent faults, soften the brutality of the materialism, and restrict the number of the figures.

"Son désir va comme le tourbillon du désir, le désir dont l'ardente immensité se peint dans ses yeux, le désir plein d'attente et d'amour, avec son ciel insatiable, avec ses traînées multicolores" (IV. p. 221). "Herrliche ist die Lotosen Chantant des pommiers orientaux dans son bocage au bord du garage, et, comme une fleur vivante, volant de branche en branche, parmi les roses d'un immense volkswagen toujours fleurie" (IV. p. 222). More especially in the cases we have noted of over emphasis of the materialism, it seems that the image has entirely replaced the original idea in the mind of the artist. Indeed, indeed it does a way the figure-five and the literal that we are inclined frequently to believe that he loses the capacity of distinguishing between the two, that he uses the figures without being conscious that he is departing from the normal speech.

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Chapter. III

CAUSES THAT CONTRIBUTED TO BALZAC'S FREQUENT USE
OF THE FIGURE OF SPEECH.

As one may judge from the above, Balzac is exceedingly fond of the figure of speech and uses it much more than the average prose writer. His novels at times teem with them; a single comparison is carried out into many ramifications or one follows another in quick succession, as on page ⁴¹⁹ 38 of the Lys dans la vallée ^{fifteen} where there are fourteen distinct figures. Moreover, a large proportion of the figures shock our sense of propriety in one way or another. On the whole in quantity and quality they present a rather undigested and indigestible mass. Indeed the severe and almost universal criticism of Balzac's style -- aside from composition in the broader sense -- is largely equivalent to a criticism of his figures of speech, for it is in them that the vulgarity, bad taste, bombast, galimatias, and pretentiousness most often find expression. When Sainte-Beuve, Taine, or Faguet wish to illustrate certain bad qualities of Balzac's style, it is his figures of speech that they quote; and if you remove the figures of speech from a page of his novels, you have as a rule a passage of simple, straightforward prose that does not in any way merit the following not altogether unjustifiable tirade of Pontmartin: "Quel encombrement! que de phrases estropiées! que de pages hydropiques! que d'obscurités! que d'afféteries! que d'emphase! que de néologismes inacceptables! que de métaphores incohérentes! que d'analogies impossibles! Sous cette richesse apparente que d'embarras et de gêne. Quelle fatigue pour arriver à faire moins bien en voulant mieux faire, à tout embrouiller en voulant tout dire." (1)

(1) Causeries littéraires, p 302

CAUSES THAT CONTRIBUTED TO BALDAG'S EMBROIDERY USE

OF THE FIGURE OF SPEECH.

As one may judge from the above, Balzac is exceedingly fond

portion of the figures shock our sense of propriety in one way or where there are fourteen distinct figures. However, a large proportion of the figures shock our sense of propriety in one way or other in other respects, as on page 36 of the two books is value comparison is carried out into many ramifications or one follows another prose writer. His novels at times seem with them; a single comparison of the figure of speech and uses it much more than the average

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almost universal criticism of Balzac's style -- a side from composition in the broader sense -- is largely equivalent to a criticism of his figures of speech, for it is in them that the vulgar, the coarse, the commonplace and the trivial are most often

from a page of his novels, you have as a rule a passage of simple, or speech that they quote; and if you remove the figures of speech or speech certain bad qualities of Balzac's style, it is his figures of speech expression. When Sainte-Beuve, Taine, or Turgot wish to illustrate

not also other negotiable divide of Tomamaria : "Chel thom-

d'opacités! que d'attéris! que d'emphase! que de néolo-

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 à l'heure d'acquiescer, que de catastrophes imminentes, que d'ennuis

tant mieux faire, a tout improviser en voulant tout dire." (1)

Hence an explanation of the figures of speech is of considerable value in a discussion of Balzac.

The problem that faces us in a study of the figures of Balzac may be formulated in the following way. Here is a man who in many respects is a master of language and who is constantly trying to find the best expression for his ideas. From his correspondence and from the testimony of his friends we have abundant evidence that he literally tortured himself in his efforts to perfect his style. Then why does he drag in this apparently extraneous mass of figures which seems so often to hinder rather than to aid his expression? Or to resolve the problem into its three main divisions: Why does Balzac use so many figures? What explanation can we find for the kind of figures that he uses? What impression is made by these figures upon the reader? In the present chapter we are concerned primarily with the first of these questions.

We must consider first a very simple explanation which offers itself at once. The figure of speech is a literary artifice and is frequently used as a stylistic ornament. It is only natural that Balzac in his efforts to attain to an artistic style should seize upon this process which had been so effectively used by others and which is easy to imitate because it appears to entail only an external grafting. This explanation accounts in large measure for the unusually frequent use of figures in the Lys dans la vallée. The greater contemporaries of Balzac were consummate stylists; Gautier, G. Sand, Hugo, Lamennais, Merimee, Stendhal, Chateaubriand, and others were endowed with artistic or poetic natures, and each had built up for himself out of the ruins of classicism a

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style suitable to his genius : styles which had many admirers in the days when the romantic emphasis on form was at its height, and which today might serve as models for certain genres. Though Balzac would not have accorded stylistic superiority to all of these, the continual harping of the critics on his lack of style worried him, and he determined to show them what he could do when he tried. The Lys dans la vallée is an attempt to rewrite Volupté and to surpass Sainte-Beuve in his own field of the psychological novel; it was to be a sublime idyl of pure love. He refers several times in his correspondence to the difficulty that he has in composing it. "J'ai voulu me servir du langage de Massillon et cet instrument-là est lourd à manier"(1) In his effort to write ornately, to make the style match the sublimity of the subject, he has added figure after figure, until he resembles the painter in the Chef-d'œuvre inconnu, who in his constant desire to add just one more element of beauty to his canvas, makes of it an unintelligible daub for all others but himself.

But we cannot accept the desire for stylistic adornment as the only or even the chief reason for the frequent use of figurative language: what we find in the Lys dans la vallée is simply an exaggeration of a natural stylistic tendency of Balzac. He was already much addicted to the figure of speech, as we see from Eugénie Grandet, and we may judge that its use corresponded to some conscious or unconscious need of the author. This brings us to the question of the fundamental purpose of figures. It is true that they may be purely stylistic ornaments, yet even as such they should produce in the reader an impression, an emotional reaction, desired by the author. But they serve also to present an idea in a clearer and more forceful manner. In the comparison of

(1) Lettres à l'étrangère, Vol. I, p. 277;

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several times in his correspondence to the difficulty that he has in composing it. "I should be sorry to leave de Massillon at our last moment--I am not a writer"(1) In his effort to

write ornamentally to make the style match the sublimity of the subject, he has added figure after figure, until he resembles the rain

in the Chateaubriand in his constant desire to add just one more element of beauty to his canvas, makes of it an unrelentingly damp for all others but himself.

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action, desired by the author. But they serve also to present an idea in a clearer and more forceful manner. In the comparison of

an unfamiliar or indescribable object to something well known to the reader, they facilitate expression by the substitution of familiar concept for a long abstract or technical discussion. The figure is, as it were, a pattern laid down, by which the reader is to cut the still shapeless cloth of his thought. The expression would lose effectiveness if we should try to give an accurate description; the figure is more forceful because it is shorter, because it requires an effort of the imagination to grasp the real meaning, which is not directly expressed. The mind is forced to form a definite concrete image. Literal speech might be compared to an electric current passing through a series of wires in contact, and the figure of speech to the spark when the two wires are separated. A metaphor such as ~~the~~ wings of night, is really an incorrect expression, causing a break in the continuity of the thought. The greater the distance between the two wires the brighter the spark will be, up to the point where the current will not make the leap; the stronger the current, the greater the possible leap. Thus the objects compared ^{may} become absolutely incompatible and you have a figure which is virtually meaningless. An impassioned style such as that of Balzac vitalizes many figures that would fall flat in a cold, classical style with, consequently, a colder more critical reader. We may suppose then that Balzac sought by the use of the figures to attain to a more adequate and more forceful expression of his ideas. In order to get a better comprehension of this statement, let us consider the problems that would face a Balzac writing in France in the early nineteenth century.

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elements in vivid writing. Our ordinary modes of expression have become so stereotyped that the words are purely abstract symbols and present no picture to the mind: they may even be used and heard without a full realization of their meaning, because they simply revive the same emotional reaction that was produced when they were heard before. It is true that language is largely a net-work of originally figurative expressions--ivre de joie, chef in its various meanings, or penser, etymologically the same as peser, but by constant use figures lose all image-arousing power and become purely abstract. The tendency in language, when such expressions become banal, is to introduce a new expression, as peser in a similar meaning to that of penser; for the mind must crystalize an abstract conception around concrete phenomena in order to use it. With the French, a supremely intellectual people who deal readily with abstract concepts, this tendency is not so evident. In the development of their language up to the nineteenth century (barring the increase and more extended use of scientific terms in the second half of the eighteenth), they have striven to limit rather than to extend their vocabulary; they have tended to restrict themselves to a single word for any one generalized concept and to leave the particular concept to be supplied by the context (Of the verbs of motion : aller, venir, se promener, reguler, or a noun such as terre). Each word gathers meaning from the surrounding words, and the word group conveys an idea which the mind grasps with little effort. The result is admirable for clearness, as the essential significance is not obscured by extraneous or non-essential elements. But such expression is colorless and is suitable especially for the transmission of abstract and conventional ideas. (1)

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elements in vivid writing. Our ordinary modes of expression have become so stereotyped that the words are purely abstract symbols and present no picture to the mind: they may even be used and heard without a full realization of their meaning, because they simply revive the same emotional reaction that was produced when they were heard before. It is true that language is largely a net-work of originally figurative expressions—type of which, in its various meanings, or polyvalently, the same as passer: but by constant use figures lose all image-arousing power and become purely abstract. The tendency in language, when such expressions become banal, is to introduce a new expression, as passer in a similar meaning to that of passer; for the mind must crystallize an abstract conception around concrete phenomena in order to use it. With the French, a supremely intellectual people who deal readily with abstract concepts, this tendency is not so evident. In the development of their language up to the nineteenth century (during the increase and more extended use of scientific terms in the second half of the eighteenth), they have striven to limit rather than to extend their vocabulary; they have tended to restrict themselves to a single word for any one generalized concept and to leave the particular concept to be supplied by the context (cf. the verbs of motion: aller, venir, se promener, regarder, or a noun such as jeune). Each word gathers meaning from the surrounding words, and the word group conveys an idea which the mind grasps with little effort. The result is admirable for clearness, as the essential significance is not obscured by extraneous or non-essential elements. But such expression is colorless and is suitable especially for the transmission of abstract and conventional ideas. (1) In English the situation is slightly different, for we have a larger vocabulary and have retained more words relating to the

the same general concept, some of which, especially those of Anglo-Saxon origin, have kept a strong literal significance (cf. edge and border). In this way certain figurative expressions which are natural and current retain more of their power of evocation, because they are not so constantly used. By the side of them exist other modes of expression, absolutely literal in the impression they give, which are used unless the writer seeks consciously or otherwise the more vivid forms. This abundance may lead to obscurity at times but as a result of it vividness of expression becomes a more natural characteristic of the language. Also such liberties as the English use of substantives as adjectives or adverbs enable us to evoke an image without seeking to go out of our way to do so: "star-~~memories~~", "violet-breath" "butter-fingered." (1) *Of the recommendation of the Pleiades and such attempted imitations as*

(1) The famous père promontoire of Victor Hugo was an attempt to introduce a similar freedom into French.

In French, imagery is farther from the line of normal speech and has to be created more consciously and externally. We may find here one explanation of the coldness of most French poetry to the average English mind: the images are either absent or lacking in spontaneity. Poetry as a condensed and abnormal form of expression has particular need of vivid conceptions and impressions, which the imagination can seize upon and from which it can radiate into the realms of the unexpressed; for if the author does not leave much to be gathered between the lines, his verse is but rhythmic prose.

If we study the great masters of French literature we find that, in a large majority of cases, they depart but little from the conventional French mode of expression. They owe their preeminence to artistic imitation of the classics, to delicate psychological analysis, to the expression of the latent passions and aspirations of man, to their charming imagination and fancy, or to their treatment of the problems of philosophy, morality, and society, all presented in a form and style that approaches perfection for that particular genre. But their creations do not give a powerful illusion of life, we do not turn a street corner expecting to meet one of their characters face to face. Rabelais, Moliere and Saint-Simon, however, belong to a smaller group who are preeminently creators. They present not abstractions but real human beings that become personal acquaintances of the reader, social orders that seem as palpable to him as the one in which he lives. There is an intangible something which we can only define by that undefinable term, genius, by which these men impose the creatures of their imagination (1) upon our consciousness in spite of the improbability or even impossibility of their ever having existed.

(1) For Saint Simon see below. infra p. 49

There is something in these authors that appeals to us as do the crude elemental forces of nature; this is reflected in their styles, which do not respect the more conventional ideas of composition. Careless of restraint they seek a mode of expression conformable to their subjects; one that leaves them unharpered in personal expression; for in the last analysis the pulse of life must be transmitted from the author's own personality. It is interesting to note that the characters of Moliere, who almost necessarily made

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greater concessions to convention, tend more than those of Rabelais and Saint-Simon to become types or abstractions.

My purpose is not to prove that Rabelais, Moliere and Saint-Simon outrank the other great writers; that is a question of standards of comparison combined with personal preference. But such a contrast as I have made does indicate that an author who produces an illusion of life must have greater freedom in the choice of his modes of expression; he must speak a language which itself has life and partakes of the nature of the creator and of the thing created..

Rabelais gave his imagination carte blanche among all the verbal niches of the renaissance and reveled in metaphors and similes; no author ever had freer range for his genius. And when we read Rabelais, we read him without stylistic prejudice, for we have no conventional and sacred standard for his time. The content and the style impress themselves upon us as so intimately related, so perfectly in harmony, that we cannot conceive of his having written in any other manner, and we are ready to class this hilarious, obscene, bewilderingly exuberant raconteur as a literary artist. (1)

(1) Pierre de la Juilliere: Les images dans Rabelais, 2^e ed. Z R Ph., Pilette XXXVII. The general types of figures in Rabelais correspond to the more materialistic ones of Balzac. Rabelais shows for instance 363 comparisons to animals.

Moliere in a soberer age made free use of the vivid, picturesque colloquial words and modes of expressions. Modern criticism has answered the many objections and admits that an author should have the right to make his character speak the language that is natural to him. Saint-Simon, in as much as he copied more closely from

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nature, may not be called a creator in the same measure as the other two; his imagination does not play so large a part, but his style recreates, if it does not create. His men and women are creatures of flesh and blood and not the puppets of historical accounts; the illusion of life on the page of a book is the same and is equally difficult to procure whether the model really existed or not, for in either case the immediate search in the conception in the mind of the author. Indeed the representation of actualities presents a peculiar danger in that the mind is frequently not able to distinguish the non-essential among the many elements that crowd in the consciousness. Saint-Simon's style caused considerable scandal when the Mémoires first appeared, and it resembles in many ways that of Balzac, with bold figures of speech and a disregard for grammatical and aesthetic niceties. (1)

(1) Such lines as these of Taine would seem to have been written on Balzac himself : "cette passion ôte au style toute ^{sa} pudeur... Modération, bon goût littéraire, éloquence, noblesse, tout est emporté et noyé... La cuisine, l'écurie, le garde-manger, la maçonnerie, la ménagerie, les mauvais lieux, il prend des expressions partout. Il est cru, trivial, et pétrit ses figures en pleine boue... c'est à ce prix qu'est le génie; uniquement et totalement englouti dans l'idée qui l'absorbe, il perd de vue la mesure, la décence et le respect. Il y gagne la force; car il y prend le droit d'aller jusqu'au bout de sa sensation, d'égaliser les mouvements de son style aux mouvements de son cœur... ce style bizarre, excessif, incohérent, surchargé est celui de la nature elle-même; nul n'est plus utile pour l'histoire de l'âme; il est la notation

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written on Balzac himself: "cette passion de son style, toute de l'homme... l'obscuration, son goût littéraire, son élévation, tout est empreint de son... la culture, l'éducation, la noblesse, tout est empreint de son... la culture, l'éducation, la noblesse, tout est empreint de son..."

Il prend des expressions partout. Il est curieux, trivial, petit ses figures en pleine force... c'est à ce prix qu'est le génie; uniquement et totalement englué dans l'idée qui l'absorbe, il perd de vue la mesure, la décence et le respect. Il y gagne la force; car il y prend le droit d'aller jusqu'au bout de sa sensation, d'égaliser les mouvements de son style à aux mouvements de son cœur... ce style bizarre, excessif, incohérent, surchargé, est celui de la nature elle-même; nul n'est plus utile pour l'histoire de l'âme; il est la notation

littérale et spontanée des sensations! Essay on Saint-Simon
in Essais de critique et d'histoire (pp.241-251)

Gautier says of Balzac : "La langue française, épurée par les classiques du dix-septième siècle, n'est propre lorsqu'on veut s'y conformer qu'à rendre des idées générales, et à peindre des figures conventionnelles dans un milieu vague. Pour exprimer cette multiplicité de détails, de caractères, de types, d'architectures, d'aménagements, Balzac fut obligé de se forger une langue spéciale, composée de toutes les technologies, de tous les argots de la science, de l'atelier, des coulisses, de l'amphithéâtre même. Chaque mot qui disait quelque chose était le bienvenu, et la phrase, pour la recevoir, ouvrait une incise, une parenthèse, et s'allongeait complaisamment. C'est ce qui a fait dire aux critiques superficiels qu'il ne savait pas écrire.--Il avait, bien qu'il ne le crut pas, un style et un style très beau,--le style nécessaire, totale et mathématique de son idée!(1)

(1) Portraits contemporains, p.110.

It is not true, however, that Balzac continued to think that he did not have a good style, for he does not hesitate to affirm that only he, Gautier, and Hugo knew the French language. (2)

In the above quotation Gautier speaks especially of technical terms which had already been carried over into literature, in the latter part of the eighteenth century and Balzac does make free use of them. But they serve rather to give accurate, scientific descriptions of material objects, of the milieu in which his characters moved; they are an aid, but used alone they belong to the domain of scientific discussion rather than to literature. Balzac needed something more; he felt instinctively that his ideas and

impressions could not be adequately reproduced in others by means of conventional French prose, and he could not take refuge in poetry as did so many of his contemporaries for their most passionate expressions, for neither his genius nor his subject matter was poetic. He affirms in many places the author's right to coin new words and expressions to suit his ideas. In speaking of some old French words he says to his sister: "Quels jolis mots! Expriment-ils bien ce qu'ils veulent dire!... Qui donc a le droit de faire aumône à une langue si ce n'est pas l'écrivain?"(1)

(1) Vol. XXIV, p. 52

In the Contes drolatiques, where he wished merely to tell a story, he had the happy idea of going back and borrowing the rich, picturesque, and unfettered language of the sixteenth century which he handles with masterly art and charming effectiveness. Even here he probably did not attempt an accurate reproduction of the language of Rabelais; he sought freedom and not a change of masters. Language was an instrument that had to be fashioned to his purpose.

But such a medium was not suitable for modern subjects and the various philosophical and social problems that they involve. Balzac's ideas on modern style are indicated in his criticism of Stendhal, for whom he expresses unbounded admiration in so far as the content of his works were concerned, but "il n'a pas soigné la forme; il écrivait comme les oiseaux chantent, et notre langue est une sorte de Madame Honesta qui ne trouve rien de bien que ce qui est irréprochable, ciselé, léché."(2)

(2) Lettres à l'étrangère, II, pp. 491-2

He does not see how Stendhal could expect to express himself in the simple, correct, colorless, figureless style of the eighteenth

① Œuvres de Balzac vol. XXIV pp. LVII-LV

② Œuvres de Balzac vol. XXIV pp. 491-492

expressions could not be adequately reproduced in others by means of conventional French prose, and he could not take refuge in poetry as did so many of his contemporaries for their most picturesque expressions. For neither his genius nor his subject matter was poetic. He affirms in many places the author's right to coin new words and expressions to suit his ideas. In speaking of some old French words he says to his sister: "Quels Jolis mots! Expliquez-les-moi bien ce qu'ils veulent dire!...--oui donc a le droit de faire comme a une langue et ce n'est pas l'ecrivain?" (1)

(1) Vol. VIII, p. 52

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(2) *Le roman expérimental*, II, p. 211-2

He does not see how Stendhal could expect to express himself in the simple, correct, clear, effective style of the eighteenth

century.(3)

(3) Balzac is by no means alone in his desire to infuse new blood into the French language. The matter had been discussed in the journals and parliamentary debates. Chateaubriand, Mme de Staël, Victor Hugo and others had hazarded innovations in vocabulary, syntax, and figurative creations, but when all is considered they had been extremely conservative. Stendhal is an out and out reactionary in matter of language. He says in Racine et Shakespeare (1823, p. 115): "Il ne faut pas innover dans la langue parceque la langue est une chose de convention. Laissons cette gloire a Mme. de Staël, a MM. de Chateaubriand, de Marechaux, etc. Il est sur qu'il est plus vite fait d'inventer un tour que de le chercher peniblement au fond d'une Lettre provinciale ou d'une harangue de Panu. Une langue est composée de ses tours non moins que de ses mots. Toutes les fois qu'une idee a deja un tour qui l'exprime clairement, pourquoi en produire un nouveau? Cf. Prunot in Petit de Julleville : Histoire de la langue et de la littérature française, vol. VIII. p. 714

There is a most interesting paragraph in Louis Lambert which, though obscure at times, throws light on Balzac's attitude towards words as expressions of ideas. Louis Lambert is speaking of the fascinating study of the origin and development of words.

"L'assemblage des lettres, leurs forces, la figure qu'elles donnent à un mot, dessinent exactement, suivent le caractère de chaque peuple, des être inconnus dont le souvenir est en nous. qui nous expliquera philosophiquement la transition de la sensation à la pensée, de la pensée au verbe, du verbe à son expression

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hiéroglyphique, des hiéroglyphiques à l'alphabet, de l'alphabet à l'éloquence écrite, dont la beauté reside dans une suite d'images classées par les rhéteurs, et qui sont comme les hiéroglyphiques de la pensée? L'antique peinture des idées humaines configurées par les formes zoologiques n'aurait-elle pas déterminé les premiers signes dont s'est servi l'Orient pour écrire ses langages? Puis n'aurait-elle pas traditionnellement laissé quelques vestiges dans nos langues modernes, qui toutes se sont partagé les débris du verbe primitif des nations, verbe majestueux et solennel, dont la majesté, dont la solennité décroissent à mesure que vieillissent les sociétés; dont les retentissements si sonores dans la Bible hébraïque, si beau encore dans la Grèce, s'affaiblissent à travers les progrès de nos civilisations successives? Est-ce à cet ancien esprit que nous devons les mystères enfouis dans toute la parole humaine? N'existe-t-il pas dans le mot VRAI une sorte de rectitude fantastique? Ne se trouve-t-il pas dans le mot son bref qu'il exige une vague image de la chaste nudité, de la simplicité de vrai en toute chose? Cette syllabe respire je ne sais quelle fraîcheur. J'ai pris pour exemple la formule d'une idée abstraite, ne voulant pas expliquer le problème par un mot qui le rendit trop facile à comprendre, comme celui du VOL, où tout parle aux sens. N'en est-il pas ainsi de chaque verbe? Tous sont empreints d'un vivant pouvoir qu'ils tiennent de l'âme, et qu'ils lui restituent par les mystères d'une action et d'une réaction merveilleuses entre la parole et la pensée. Ne dirait-on pas d'un amant qui puise sur les lèvres de sa maîtresse autant d'amour qu'il lui en communique? Par leur seule physionomie les mots raffinent dans notre cerveau les créatures auxquelles ils servent de vêtement. (No. 3-4)

About the same idea is expressed by Taine when he defends the style of Balzac : "Vos mots sont de notations, ayant chacun sa valeur exacte, fixée par la racine et ses alliances; les siens sont des symboles dont la reverie capricieuse invente le sens et l'emploi. Il a été sept ans, dit-il, à comprendre ce qu'est la langue française. La vérité est qu'il l'a étudiée profondément, mais à sa façon, comme d'autres qu'on accuse aussi d'être barbares. Pour eux chaque mot est, non un chiffre, mais en éveil d'images: ils le pesent, le retournent, le scandent: pendant ce temps un nuage d'érotions et de figures fugitives traverse leur cerveau...le mot est pour eux l'appel soudain de ce monde vague d'apparitions évanescentes"

(1) Nouveaux essais de critiques et d'histoire, p. 42, ff.

The central idea of the paragraph in Louis Lambert is that every word presents to the mind an image of the thing that it represents, an idea which is elaborate in a way that illustrates two striking characteristics of Balzac's mind, which may be called unscientifically scientific. He is intolerant of half-way affirmations and tends to carry any principle to its ultimate conclusion; not only do concrete terms produce concrete images, but even an abstract adjective such as true; and we know that he went even farther and holds that the names of people are an index to their character. Secondly, in his mania for logical explanation of all phenomena, he imagines that the power of evocation resides in the actual form of the word and of the letters composing it, and that this results from the fact that ^{in the domain of pictures} formerly writing the idea more or less directly, which must have influenced the form and arrangement of the alphabetical symbols that were substituted for them. A typical Balzac theory, an ingenious mixing of fact and fancy, but it shows us the necessity that Balzac felt for vivid expression.

About the same idea is expressed by Taine when he defends the style of Balzac : "Les mots sont des notations, ayant chacun sa valeur exacte, liées par la racine et ses alliances ; les sons sont des symboles dont la révérité capricieuse invente le sens et l'emploi. Il a été sage, au lieu d'essayer de comprendre ce qu'est la langue française. La vérité est qu'il l'a étudiée profondément, mais à sa façon, comme d'autres du'on s'occupe aussi d'être barbares. Pour eux chaque mot est, non un chiffre, mais un aveil d'images : ils le perdent, le retournent, le scandent : pendant ce temps un nuage d'émotions et de figures fugitives traverse leur cerveau... Le mot est pour eux l'élément d'un monde de sensations et d'appétitions éternelles." (1) Le roman expérimental, p. 117.

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He claims that the literal expression has the power to evoke the image, but a few lines above he has said the impression made by a word becomes more and more indistinct as you advance from the most ancient language towards the modern, and also that rhetorical images are the hieroglyphics of thought. He feels this so much that in this very paragraph he uses numerous figures in order to express his idea.

From what we have said of the nature of figures of speech it is evident that they offer at least a partial solution of the problem of stylistic revivification. The possibilities of figurative creation are infinite in number and variety. We have already seen that Balzac uses comparisons in order to convey more adequately, more strikingly, more palpably the desired impression. Note for example the vivid picture of the wretched abandoned Rabouillense given by this succession of figures. It all but gives you the physiological reaction of disgust that you would feel in beholding such a scene in real life: "Une femme, verte comme une noyée de deux jours, et maigre comme l'est une étique deux heures avant sa mort. Ce cadavre infect avait une méchante rouennerie à carreaux sur sa tête dépourvue de cheveux. Le tour des yeux était rouge et les paupières étaient comme des pellicules d'œuf" (MG, p. 333³³³). Also the figures furnish an escape valve for his plethora of ideas and his exuberance of imagination: "Les conversations entre camarades étaient dominées par le monde oriental et sultanesque du Palais-Royal. Les Palais Royal étaient un Eldorado d'amour où, le soir, les lingots couraient tout monnaies. La cessaient les doutes les plus vierges, la pouvaient s'apaiser nos curiosités allumées! Le Palais Royal et moi, nous fûmes deux

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asymptotes dirigées l'une vers l'autre sans pouvoir se rencontrer" (LV, p. ⁴⁰²15). Or : "Voyez par quelles voies nous avons marche l'un vers l'autre; quel aimant nous a dirigés sur l'Océan des eaux amères, vers la source d'eau douce, coulant au pied des monts sur un sable paillette, entre deux rives vertes et fleuries. N'avons nous pas, comme les mages, suivi la même étoile? Nous voici devant la crèche d'où s'éveille un divin enfant qui lancera ses fleches au front des arbres nus, qui nous ranimera le monde par ses cris joyeux, qui par des plaisirs incessants donnera du goût à la vie, rendra aux nuits leur sommeil, aux jours leur allegresse. Qui donc a serré chaque année de nouveaux noeuds entre nous? Ne sommes-nous plus que frere et soeur? Ne deliez jamais ce que le ciel a réuni. Les souffrances dont vous parlez étaient le grain repandu à flots par la main du semeur pour faire eclore la moisson déjà dorée par le plus beau des soleils. Voyez! Voyez! N'irons-nous pas ensemble tout cueillir brin à brin" (LV, p. ⁴⁵⁸93). The impression given by such passages may be painful at times, but they represent a super-abundant vitality, the overflow of a highly developed sensibility and should be judged in their setting as regards the work and the author. (1)

(1) Compare Saint-Preux excusing himself for figures used in a former letter : "Pour peu qu'on ait de chaleur dans l'esprit, on a besoin de metaphores et d'expressions figurées pour se faire entendre... il n'y a qu'un geometre et un sot qui puissent parler sans figures... Mes propres phrases me font rire, je l'avoue, et je les trouve absurdes, grace au soin que vous avez pris à les isoler; mais laissez-les où je les ai mises, vous les trouverez claires, et même energiques"

savantotés dirigées l'une vers l'autre sans pouvoir se rencontrer" (IV, p. 12). Or : "Voyez par quelles voies nous avons marché l'un vers l'autre; quel aimant nous a dirigés sur l'océan des sens éternels, vers la source d'eau douce, coulant au pied des monts sur un sable pailleté, entre deux rives vertes et fleuries. Nous pas, comme les mages, suivi la même étoile? Nous voici devant la crèche d'un a'éveille un divin enfant qui lance ses flèches au front des arbres nus, qui nous ramènent le monde par ses cris joyeux, qui par des plaisirs incessants donne au goût de la vie, rendant aux nuits leur sommeil, aux jours leur allégresse. Qui donc a cette chaque année de nouveaux accords entre nous? Ne sommes-nous plus une frère et sœur? Ne geliez jamais ce que le ciel a tenu. Les souffrances dont vous parlez étaient le grain répandu à flots par la main du semeur pour faire éclore la moisson de la gloire car le plus beau des soleils. Voyez! Voyez! N'irons-nous pas ensemble tout enfluir brin à brin" (IV, p. 12). The impression given by such passages may be painful at times, but they represent a super-abundant vitality, the overflow of a highly developed sensibility and should be judged in their setting as regards the work and the author. (I)

(1) Compare Saint-Pierre exclaiming himself for figures used in a former letter : "Pour peu qu'on ait de chaleur dans l'esprit, on a besoin de métaphores et d'expressions figurées pour se faire entendre... Il n'y a qu'un géomètre et un sot qui puissent parler sans figures... Les propres phrases ne font rien, je l'avoue, et je les trouve absurdes, parce qu'on ne les voit que prises à l'isolement; mais laissez-les en je les ai mises, vous les trouverez claires, et même énergiques

Balzac then was drawn instinctively to the figure of speech because it seemed to furnish a more adequate expression for certain phases of his genius; and though he ^{may have} made many mistakes, we cannot say that he failed in his purpose. I shall discuss this point, as to the effect of the style on the reader, later on, giving here, however, a quotation from Sainte-Beuve, who certainly cannot be accused of favorable prejudice. His praise is given grudgingly and with restrictions: "Il est un peu comme ces généraux qui n'emportent ^a le moindre position qu'en prodigant le sang des troupes (c'est l'encre seul qu'il prodigue) et qu'en perdant ^{énormément} beaucoup de monde. Mais bien que l'économie des moyens doive compter, l'essentiel après tout c'est arriver à un résultat, et M. de Balzac en maintes occasions est et demeure victorieux." ¹¹ Il commence si bien chaque récit, il nous circonviennent si vivement, qu'il n'y a pas moyen de résister et de dire non à ses promesses. Il nous prend les mains, il nous introduit de gré ou de force dans chaque aventure. ¹¹ ~~On s'im-~~ patient, on froisse la page sous la main, mais on y revient est ému ⁽¹⁾ enfin, entraîné on se penche malgré soi vers ce gouffre inassouvi. ⁽²⁾

(1) Portraits contemporains, II, p. 343,

~~(2) Portraits littéraires, p. 342, note and p. 351~~

What higher praise can an author receive than that he has gained his ends, that he has held your interest, imposed his ideas upon you, and made you accept his criticisms in spite of yourself. Such praise concerns the style as well as the content, whatever the intention of the critic, for such an impression could not be produced if the style were not in harmony with the content. That is all we can rightly ask of any style. Brinetière says: "Trop souvent il n'a réussi à exprimer sa pensée qu'au moyen d'une multitude de métaphores

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 (1) *Le roman contemporain*, II, p. 313.
 (2) *Revue littéraire*, p. 342, note and p. 351.
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qui approchent du galimatias"(1);

(1) Honoré de Balzac, p.294

but these very metaphors give an impression of vigor, or material life, they relieve the monotony and chill of enumeration of detail and abstract analysis, they keep our mind alert by the necessity of forming and relating concrete images, by the continual occurrence of the unexpected which we must fit into the trend of thought. Balzac's world, his philosophy, even his spiritualism and metaphysics are all materialistic and could not possibly be expressed in purely abstract terms; his style is an organic and necessary part of his work, and should not be criticized without taking this fact into account. But before we can pass final judgment on the merits and demerits of Balzac's figures we must attempt to explain their character by their relation to Balzac and his subject matter.

and approach to "Materialism" (1);

(1) HONORÉ DE BALZAC, p. 234

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RELATION OF BALZAC'S FIGURES TO HIS PSYCHOLOGY,

The figures of Balzac, then, are the result of an effort, conscious or otherwise, to render his expression more vivid and vigorous, to reproduce more exactly his own sensations in the mind of the reader. We have seen, however, that very often his figures do not produce the impression that he evidently intended they should, that they conceal or becloud his thought instead of expressing it, that they are revolting to our sensibilities. This chapter and the next will be an attempt to explain these ~~facts~~ by isolating certain of the influences which have combined to produce the figures such as we find them. We have already, in Chapter II, treated this question in so far as it concerns the psychological process that results immediately in the production of a figure; what we have to say now is supplementary to the features already noted, and at the same time it serves to explain them, in as much as we are getting deeper into the psychological nature of the author. It is an elusive subject and as complex as human nature itself; we cannot hope to be exhaustive, nor can we affirm anything more than certain well defined tendencies, which, while incapable of mathematical proof, present plausible solutions for the literary phenomena which we are discussing. The problem is simplified, however, by the fact that what we have to explain are faults and excesses rather than excellence. It is easier to explain the fall of an eagle than its flight.

In the first place we must remember that Balzac's attitude towards life is in general anything but idealistic; and the fact that a figure is displeasing to us frequently means, not that the figure is improper from the standpoint of the author, but that

The figures of Holman, then, are the result of an effort, conscious or otherwise, to render his expression more vivid and vigorous, to reproduce more exactly his own sensations in the kind of the words he has used, however, that very often his figures do not produce the impression that he evidently intended they should, and they conceal or weaken his thought instead of expressing it, that they are revealing to our generalities. This chapter and the next will be an attempt to explain these things by isolating certain of the influences which have tended to produce the figures such as we find them. We have already, in Chapter II, treated this question in so far as it concerns the psychological process that results immediately in the production of a figure; now we have to say how it is supplementary to the literature already noted, and at the same time it serves to explain them, in as much as we are getting deeper into the psychological nature of the author. It is an elusive subject and as complex as human nature itself; we cannot hope to be exhaustive, nor can we affirm anything more than certain well defined tendencies, which, while incapable of mathematical proof, present themselves as solutions for the literary phenomena which we are discussing. The problem is simplified, however, by the fact that what we have to explain are faults and excesses rather than excellences. It is easier to explain the fall of an eagle than the flight. In the first place we must remember that Holman's attitude towards life is in general mystical but idealistic; and the fact that a figure is disfiguring to us frequently means, not that the figure is taken from the viewpoint of the author, but that

we are not willing to accept the conception of life which produced the figure. Balzac's figures are flesh of his flesh, and they lack certain qualities of delicacy just as he does; and frequently this fact is sufficient explanation for the choice of a comparison.

I. Influence of the characters on Balzac and on each other.

Many figures that seem improper may be explained by the manner in which Balzac conceived and executed his novels. Anecdotes, testimony of friends, and his work itself show to what extent he was obsessed by his characters. He talked of them to his friends as of real men and women, discussing their characters and their futures. He would shut himself up for long seasons, sustaining himself almost entirely with coffee, at home for no one but Grandet, Brideau, or Rastignac, living the life of each character, thinking his thoughts, experiencing his joys and sorrows. The force, verity, and illusion of life in his creations result largely from this ability to subordinate his own personality, to lose himself in his characters. But as a result of this process, we find many expressions coming from the pen of Balzac that would be natural only in the mouth of one of his characters. The figures in Un ménage de garçon are usually such as we would expect of the leading character, Philippe Brideau. La Mise du département is composed in a style full of conceits and vulgar pretension such as constantly arise in the conversations of Diana Piederfer and of the journalist Lousteau. From these two Balzac seems to borrow such expressions as: "Sa robe de chambre...ce produit incestueux d'un ancien pardessus chiné de Madame Piederfer et d'une robe de feu de Madame de la Raudraye" (p. 66); "Horticulture des vulgarités" (p. 78).

The first thing I noticed when I stepped out of the car was the heat. It was a sticky, oppressive heat that seemed to wrap around me like a heavy blanket. I had heard that the weather in the South was terrible, but I didn't realize it would be so intense. The sun was beating down on my face, and I could feel my skin starting to sweat. I took a deep breath, trying to ignore the discomfort, and looked around. The landscape was flat and desolate, with a few scattered trees and a distant horizon line. The air was thick with the smell of dust and exhaust from the cars parked nearby.

The influence of the character on the plot was a subtle but powerful one. It was a character who had been through a lot, a man who had seen the world from many different perspectives. His experiences had shaped him into a person who was both wise and weary, a man who knew the value of a good story and the power of a well-told tale. He was a man who had learned to listen, to truly listen to the people around him, and to find the truth in their words. His character was a reflection of the world he lived in, a world that was full of pain and suffering, but also full of hope and the possibility of a better future. His influence on the plot was a testament to the power of a good character, a character who could make a story so much more meaningful and so much more memorable.

The theme of the story was a simple one, but it was a theme that resonated with many people. It was a story about the power of the written word, about the ability of a good story to transport us to another world and to make us feel like we are part of something bigger than ourselves. It was a story about the importance of the written word in our lives, a story that reminded us of the power of the written word to shape our world and to give us a sense of purpose and meaning. The story was a testament to the power of the written word, a story that showed us that the written word could be a force for good, a force that could change the world and make a difference in the lives of the people who read it. The story was a reminder that the written word was not just a collection of words on a page, but a powerful tool that could be used to create a better world and to make a difference in the lives of the people who read it.

"Sa femme exécutait une sonate de paroles et des duos de dialectique" (p.78)³⁹⁵; "Ces exorbitantes dépenses d'esprit et d'attention" (p.81)³⁹⁷; "Son feuilleton dans un journal quotidien qui ressemblait au rocher de Symphe et qui tombait tous les lundis sur la barbe de sa plume"⁴⁸⁴(p.201). L'Illustre Gaudissart is especially striking in this respect, as there is only one character of importance. If we compare the figures of Gaudissart with those of Balzac in this conte we find it hard to differentiate them. The same is true for the style as a whole; we might imagine that we are reading the memoirs of Gaudissart.

There are possible advantages in this stylistic contagion. The description of a Homais in the prose of a Flaubert is not altogether above criticism, for a dual impression is produced on the reader by the character and by the style, and we see the character only through the style, that is, through the eyes of the author who stands aloof. In one of the above mentioned novels of Balzac the impression on the reader is single and more vivid, for the style and the character are the same; the style simply furnishes a harmonious stage setting for the actors. On the other hand, however, an author who composes in this manner loses the use of his critical faculties, he loses the perspective that is necessary in order to restrain and correct his imagination. Also, in a work where there are several distinct characters, one character or one type is likely to dominate the book and the style. Such is the case with Un ménage de garçon, even to the point of affecting the very speech of the other characters. The brutal expressions of Joseph, the artist, are especially striking, and his figures in every case but one are based on crude puns or a cynical materialism. In the Lys dans la vallée, priests, raids, Natalie, and Lady

Dudley all speak the language of Felix and Madame de Mortsauf, and only the carefully constructed character of M. de Mortsauf stands out in strong contrast. There seems to be a certain inflexibility in the mind of Balzac, which rendered difficult for him the quick changes of tone and point of view in his novels, and which must have been a constant hindrance to him in his dramatic efforts. One of the merits of Eugénie Grandet is that here he seems to have overcome this difficulty. Three characters, Grandet, Eugénie and Nanon stand out with especial distinctness, and by their mutual reaction they seem to hold the author in restraint.

It is worth while to note here the use of figures by the characters in this novel. There are some forty in the speeches of Grandet; a large number of them are banal, even to the point of being colloquialisms, but they express excellently the attitude of mind of the man, his matter-of-fact brutality and obsession by the idea of money: "Il faut laisser passer la première averse" [Tears of Charles for his father] (p. 286); "Est-ce que nous ne vivons pas des morts [as the crows]? Qu'est-ce donc que les successions" (p. 272); "Tous ce gens-là ne servent de harpons ^{pour} à pecher" (p. 37); "Je serai dépouillé, trahi, tué, dévoré par ma fille" (p. 359); "Les écus vivent et grouillent comme les hommes. Ça va, ça vient, ça sue, ça produit" (p. 346); "Quand elle aurait doré son cousin de la tête aux pieds" (p. 350). The money element is present in a majority of his figures, but the most interesting are the cases where he expresses other ideas in terms of finances: "Je ne veux pas qu'il t'arrive malheur à l'échéance de ton âge" (p. 342); or the more banal "Il est sept heures et demie, vous devriez aller vous serrer dans votre portefeuille" (p. 302).

Eugénie uses four figures; they are banally poetical, and in

The first of these is the fact that the novel is a work of fiction, and not a work of history. The second is the fact that the novel is a work of fiction, and not a work of history. The third is the fact that the novel is a work of fiction, and not a work of history.

one case rather ludicrous : "Le malheur veille pendant qu'il dort"(p.²⁷⁸~~85~~): "Je m'embarquerai sur la foi de votre parole pour traverser les dangers de la vie à l'abri de votre nom"(p.³⁸⁷~~239~~). The nine figures used by Nanon are admirable ^{au} expression of the plain-spoken, devout peasant : "Il est étendu comme un veau sur son lit et pleure comme une Madeleine"(p.²⁸⁸~~99~~): L'enfant dort comme un chérubin...comme s'il était le roi de la terre...comme un sabot (p.²⁷⁵⁻²⁷⁶~~81-2~~): "Il y en a qui, pus y deviennent vieux, pus y durcissent ; mais lui (Grandet), il se fait doux comme votre cassis, et y ra-bonnit(p.³⁴³~~176~~).

The other figures are in harmony with their users. Deserving of special comment are the eleven metaphors in the letter of Grandet's brother, which, though very materialistic, become poetic in their sombre, impassioned vigor : "J'aurais voulu sentir de saintes promesses dans la chaleur de ta main, qui m'eût réchauffé" (p.²⁵⁷~~55~~): "Il ignorait, par bonheur, que les derniers flots de ma vie s'épanchaient dans cet adieu"(p.²⁵⁶~~53~~): " Je voudrais avoir le bras assez fort pour l'envoyer d'un seul coup dans les cieux, près de sa mère"(p.²⁵⁶~~54~~). These expressions seem very natural when we consider the situation of the writer.

II. - Figures resulting from the substitution of imagination for observation.

If we examine the table given above with a view of determining what purposes guided Balzac in the use of figures of speech, we are struck at once with the fact that practically all his figures have to do with mankind. It is true that one of the innovations of Balzac in the novel was the importance that he gave to the material surroundings of his characters; and the description of

physical objects takes up a considerable part of these three novels, though he does not go to extremes as in some of the others. But in dealing with physical objects, he does not feel the need of figurative expression, for the literal term brings up a concrete image; and Balzac, who had an admirable vision for the external aspects of things and a vocabulary overflowing with all the technicalities to express what he sees, feels that he can give a more accurate impression of the object in question by a detailed description than by comparing it to other objects or by imbuing it with life by personification.

It is in dealing with the more intangible phases of life that he feels the need of figurative language, of an expression that substitutes a concrete image for an abstract concept or spiritual phenomena. In other words he is not a psychologist, he has not the power to paint in abstract terms the internal working of a complex soul. His greatest creations are those in which the character expresses itself almost entirely in actions; these external manifestations he chooses with an admirable instinct, so that the character seems alive and real for us; but the psychology remains simple, composed largely of the generalizations of elemental principles. These characters, moreover, are materialistic: Balzac moves at ease in the money-paved courts of Grandet's brain. The difficulty comes when it is a question of a delicate and idealized character. He says himself in the Lys dans la vallée: "Lorsqu'une vie ne se compose que d'action et de mouvement, tout est bientôt dit; mais quand s'est passée dans les régions les plus élevées de l'âme, son histoire est diffuse" (p. 358).

In the portrayal of character Balzac relies largely on

a principle which is derived from the theories of Lavater, for whom he had a most profound respect. Lavater holds that the character of a man is ^{revealed} revealed, not only by his features, but by his dress, his house, his furniture, all his milieu; the little nook of the world in which he fits and which he shapes to suit himself, reacts in turn upon him until it becomes his very image. (1)

(1) John Caspar Lavater : Essai sur la Physiognomie. La

Haye 1783-1803, Vol. I, p. 27

Dr. F. Baldensperger : "Les Theories de Lavater dans la litterature francaise," in Etudes d'histoire litteraire, 2e serie.

Balzac stoutly defended these theories, and, in applying them, he arranged so admirably the milieu of his characters that their psychological weakness hardly appears. They fit so naturally into the scheme of things that they seem to be a part; remove Madame Vauquer from her pension and she becomes a mere shadow. We are inclined at times to believe that Balzac would deny the existence of individual psychology, holding that a man's mind works by fixed laws according to the influences of his surroundings; and it is doubtless true that the author's materialistic conceptions hindered his developing any extended psychological facility.

But, strange as it may seem at first thought, it is the inner man that interests Balzac primarily. His purpose is to paint souls, and even to go beyond the sphere of the ordinary psychological novel, to paint them in their deepest and most spiritual expressions--in a word he aspires to metaphysics. And so when he begins an extended description of physical objects, he is careful to tell us that it is necessary for the proper understanding of the drama which is to follow. From this external shell he believes

he can penetrate to the germ of life within, as he tells us in the opening page of Facino Cane: "Chez moi l'observation était déjà devenue intuitive, elle pénétrait l'âme sans négliger le corps; ou plutôt elle saisissait si bien les détails extérieurs, qu'elle allait sur-le-champ au delà; elle me donnait la faculté de vivre de la vie de l'individu sur laquelle elle s'exerçait." He tries to project within the soul his vision for externals, and in doing so he is departing from the realm of observation for that of imagination. Imagination is the mother of figures, and so we are not surprised to hear Valentine say in the Peau de Chagrin: "L'exercice de la pensée, la recherche des idées, les contemplations tranquilles de la science nous prodiguent d'ineffables délices, indescriptibles comme tout ce qui participe de l'intelligence, dont les phénomènes sont invisibles à nos sens extérieurs. Aussi sommes-nous toujours forcés d'expliquer les mystères de l'esprit par des comparaisons matérielles." (p. 81) (124)

While we are discussing the figures resulting from the substitution of imagination for observation it is well to note also that often the whole character is largely a product of imagination, which plays a much larger part in the work of Balzac than we are sometimes inclined to admit. He is far from the note-book method of his naturalistic followers, a method which limits the operation of the imagination and especially that phase of imagination that results in figurative creation. As has frequently been stated, it would have been a physical impossibility for Balzac to observe the two thousand characters that he created and followed through the vicissitudes of life with the minuteness of a Zola or a Goncourt; the great amount of his production, the endless

of the fact that the two thousand characters that he created and followed through the vicissitudes of life with the randomness of a solo or a concerto; the great beauty of his production, the elegance of his handwriting, the fact that he was a physical impossibility for anyone to imitate, which played a much larger part in the work of Balzac than we are sometimes inclined to admit. He is far from the note-book method of his naturalistic followers, a method which limits the operation of the imagination and essentially that mass of imagery which the human mind is capable of creating. He was tremendously keen about it, he would have been a physical impossibility for anyone to imitate, the two thousand characters that he created and followed through the vicissitudes of life with the randomness of a solo or a concerto; the great beauty of his production, the elegance of his handwriting, the fact that he was a physical impossibility for anyone to imitate.

correction and reworking, his financial obligations and adventures, his social duties would not have left him the time. Gautier is the first, I believe, to use the very fitting term voyant, in connection with him. (1) What he observes ^{in his ~~known~~ contact with life} is merely a starting point

(1) Portraits contemporains p.63

for his imagination; it may lie dormant in his brain for years, fermenting, as it were. He claims to be able to reconstruct a whole human being from a single trait, just as Cuvier reconstructed an extinct animal from a single bone. Thus Camille Maupin bears but little resemblance to her model, George Sand. Similarly such characters as Rastignac, Valentin, Félix de Vandernes, and Louis Lambert are evidently in part biographical, (2) yet a close

(2) Cf. the testimony of a friend of Balzac in the years of his literary apprenticeship : Jules de Petigny in La France centrale (de Blois) 4, mars 1855 cited by Louveau : Hist. ^{des oeuvres de Balzac} pp.277-281

study shows comparatively few concrete similarities. Similar instances might be cited for other authors, especially of the romantic period; only the method differs. We may have a narrative following closely the facts, with some of the ugly spots gilded over as in the Confession d'un enfant du siècle; we may have an idealisation as in Grazielle, or a symbol as in Faust. Balzac's method seems to have been to start from some characteristic, passion, aspiration, or circumstance in his own life, which he isolates, surrounds with the necessary elements of a separate existence, and carries mercilessly to its logical conclusion. In the person of Louis Lambert, ^{whom} ~~which~~ he handles with more genuine delicacy and comprehending tenderness than his other characters, we seem to see an effort to discover what would have been his fate, if he had

continued in the way of the studies that led to the composing of the youthful essay on the will, and eventually to his sickness and removal from the college de Vendome. The story, being but slightly dependant on external events, remains more personal with Balzac than his other quasi autobiographies, where the character develops in such a way as to be absolutely distinct from the personality of the author; I might also add that, being largely concerned with psychological phenomena, it abounds in figures of speech.

This ever active imagination, powerful to the extent of approximating hallucination, very naturally translates itself into *figures of speech*, especially when the idea was that Balzac found difficult to express. Balzac's says that "on exprime mieux ce qu'on conçoit que ce qu'on a éprouvé," (1), but there is a vagueness

(1) Lettres à l'Étrangère, I, p. 4

about the idealized unknown that is only too evident in the *lazy* impressions that we receive from his figures dealing with the more poetic characters. The significance is not very clear to us, and we wonder *whether* Balzac himself had any definite conception of what he wanted to say or *whether* he justifies the criticism of Taine, who says, a propos of Balzac's criticism of Stendhal's style:—
 "quand votre idée *faut de réflexion* est encore imparfaite, ne pouvant la montrer clairement, vous indiquez les objets auxquelles elle ressemble, vous sortez de l'expression courte et directe pour vous jeter à droite et à gauche dans les comparaisons. C'est donc par *impuissance* que vous accumulez les images; faute de pouvoir marquer *nettement* la première fois votre pensée vous la répétez vaguement plusieurs fois, et le lecteur, qui veut vous comprendre, doit suppléer à votre faiblesse ou à votre *paresse* pensée, en vous transmissant vous-même à vous-même, en vous expliquant ce que vous vouliez dire et ce que vous

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n'avez pas dit."(1)

(1) Nouveaux essais de critique et d'histoire, p.253⁴

Taine was strongly under the influence of Stendhal when he wrote this, but it is true that a figure of speech may conceal a thought or the absence of thought; and if the reader himself has no very definite conception of the subject under discussion, he will pass on content with the mere sound of the words. On the other hand, as Balzac intimates, you cannot describe a man's soul in the same way that you do his body. Words have some of the qualities of a measuring rod when dealing with concrete objects; when dealing with abstracts they are elastic, indefinite, personal. A concrete comparison may be an aid; if a woman suggests a flower to the author, he may hope to reproduce his impression of the woman in the mind of his reader by comparing her to a flower. But it requires an unerring instinct and a poetic delicacy to choose always the proper comparison, and to suppress or hold in the background those qualities of the physical object that do not harmonize with the impression desired.

On the other hand a figure of speech is certainly not the only solution for the problem, and the fact that Stendhal, who is primarily a psychologist, rarely departs from literal expression, would indicate that it is not the most natural solution, that its use is really a sign of weakness or uncertainty of analysis. Stendhal is perfectly at ease with abstract ideas; he analyses the emotions and thoughts of his characters, in their origins, development, and effects, until the soul seems to be laid bare^{as} by a scalpel. An interesting comparison can be made between Flaubert and Balzac, both of whom had a physical rather than an intellectual vision.



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It goes without saying that neither abstains entirely from abstract analysis; Flaubert resorts occasionally also to concrete comparisons, but his most typical method seems to be that noted by Bourget : "Il considéra qu'une tête humaine est une chambre noire où passent et repassent des images de tous ordres : images de mille jadis traverses qui se représentent avec une portion de leur forme et de leur couleur; images des émotions jadis ressenties qui se représentent avec une portion de leur delice ou de leur anetune... Pour Flaubert... décomposer scientifiquement le travail d'une tête humaine, c'est analyser ces images qui affluent en elle, déceler celles qui reviennent habituellement et le rythme d'après lequel elles reviennent." (1) In other words Flaubert lays bare the

(1) Essais de Psychologie contemporaine, I, 161 ff.

soul of the character in a certain situation by making him think aloud, by describing the images, usually physical, that present themselves to his mind. The thoughts and images, taken in connection with the situation, give a very definite impression of the mental attitude of the character.

As for our author, when we find Félix de Vandernes trying to explain what he feels by such a succession of figures as : "Je ne saurais expliquer dans quel état je fus en m'en allant. Mon âme avait absorbé mon corps, je ne pesais pas, je ne marchais point, je volais. Je sentais en moi-même ce regard, il m'avait inondé de lumière, comme son Adieu, monsieur! avait fait retentir en mon âme les harmonies que contient l'O filii... filii de la résurrection pascale. Je naissais à une nouvelle vie. J'étais donc quelque chose pour elle! je m'enivrais en des langues de pourpre. Des flammes passèrent devant mes yeux fermés en se poursuivant

dans les ténèbres comme les jolis veris-seaux de feu qui courent les uns après les autres sur les cendres du papier brûlé. Dans mes rêves, sa voix devint je ne sais quoi de palpable, une atmosphère qui m'enveloppa de lumière et de parfums, une mélodie qui *me* caressa l'esprit" (IV, p. ⁴⁴⁶ 447), we recognize in it Balzac's favorite method of depicting the etats d'ame of his characters, a method that results from a certain incapacity for abstract psychological analysis

III

Relation of figures to an attitude of mind.

This concrete expression of abstracts is, however, only a phase of the general materializing tendency in the figures. By materialistic I mean, not necessarily the opposite of poetic, but the opposite of idealistic, for as I have stated before, a figure may be materialistic and poetic at the same time. We find in Balzac very few personifications, and those *few show* little originality; there are comparatively few comparisons between things on the same plane; but the figure of speech is persistently employed to express the human attributes in terms of the animal, plant, and material worlds. In this great predominance of realistic figures we can see a reflexion of the realistic attitude of mind. The realist claims to depict life as it is, but in spite of all the theories to the contrary, it is evident that really normal life is an unsatisfactory subject for literature; there must be a certain amount of exaggeration, *the form of the insistence on the bête humaine. His aim is to assume* which with the realist takes ^{the} the attitude of the impartial, impersonal observer, putting nothing of himself in the picture that he paints. Humanity becomes a mere complex organism, a set of cogs whose operations and functions he is to observe and explain; the

attention is centred on those phases of human life that are most easily seen, understood and described : the animal and material side of man's existence. The more spiritual elements are subordinated to the external, in terms of which they find expression.

When the realist uses figures of speech to express himself, we are justified in expecting just such figures as we find in Balzac : the expression of abstract qualities in terms of what can be seen and felt, the simplification of complex human nature by making it conform to vegetable existence or to the simple psychology of the animals. Even when the romantic side of Balzac's nature is uppermost and he tries to idealize his characters, there is little change in this materialistic tendency, which represents the fundamental bent of his mind and imagination : the poetry in the Lys dans la valée is so covered with the dust of earth as to be hardly recognizable.

When any mention of figurative imagination is made, the name of Victor Hugo naturally suggests itself. The work of M. E. Hugnet has made a comparison of his figures with those of Balzac comparatively simple, and we cannot do better than to quote the author's own conclusions concerning the general tendency of Hugo's imagination: "D'autre part, nous avons vu comment il donne à tout la vie, et même la volonté, reconnaissant dans les autres des bouches qui rient ou qui baillent, dans les branches des bras tendus, dans les rochers les griffes réchantes. Comment n'aurait-il pas l'idée de donner à tout^s les forces de la nature, avec la volonté, l'intelligence?" He is attempting to explain the frequent comparison by Victor Hugo of crude nature to the products of human art] L'océan, la goutte d'eau, le vent, et même des abstractions, le temps, le

hasard, ne peuvent-ils devenir des artistes dont la collaboration tantôt patiente, tantôt brutale, mais toujours infatigable, et des milliers d'années à produire des prodigieux chefs-d'œuvre?

L'océan n'est pas toujours la quenele qui devore le navire, il est aussi la main qui sculpte, cisele et polit le rocher. ⁽¹⁾ "On sait comment tout s'anime dans l'imagination de Victor Hugo : la vague, la nuée, le rocher, l'arbre, la fleur. On sait comment partout il distingue les formes et les mouvements de l'homme ⁽²⁾ et de l'animal."

(1) Le sens de la forme dans les métaphores de Victor Hugo.

p.299

(2) Le couleur, la lumière et l'ombre dans les métaphores

de Victor Hugo, p.59

"Toujours obsédé par l'idée du mystère, des liens invisibles entre tous les êtres, il cherche ^{partout} ~~toujours~~ des symboles, la manifestation de ~~des~~ rapports que l'intelligence humaine peut tout au plus soupçonner. Ajoutons à cela cette vie consciente qu'il prête volontiers à tout, son habitude de comparer l'activité des forces de la nature à l'activité de l'homme, d'admirer la richesse inépuisable de l'univers, la prodigalité qui remplit de diamants l'espace infini sans oublier d'en suspendre un à l'extrémité du brin d'herbe." (3) "Mais surtout, ce ciel est vivant. Les astres n'éclairent pas le vide, l'indifferent. ^{l'inconscient} Ce sont des flambeaux qui, comme ceux de nos raisons, éclairent la vie et l'activité. Ce sont des yeux qui nous observent, etc." (4)

(3) La couleur, la lumière et l'ombre dans les métaphores de Victor Hugo, p.286.

(4) Ibid., p.172

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Of the figures cited in the two volumes of M. Huguet, practically all will fall into one of the following three classes.

1. Comparisons between physical objects suggested by external similarities of form and color. In these we note a persistent tendency to compare the crude and natural to a product of human art, - a tendency which we have seen expressed in a few figures of the Lys dans la vallée.

2. The animations of nature.

3. Comparisons based on a symbolic interpretation of the second term. Some of these correspond externally to the materialistic comparisons of Balzac; but by the choice of the comparison and the manner of expression, the concrete concept with Hugo loses its material significance and becomes a pure symbol of an abstract idea, so that the actual concrete expression of an abstract concept is largely neutralized. This group would include a great many figures which are not included in the classification of M. Huguet, such as the representation of conscience as "la boussole de l'inconnu" or "la colonne vertébrale de l'âme."

Such a use of the figure of speech corresponds to certain romantic tendencies. Prepossessed with his ego, the romanticist infuses his own nature, not only into his characters, but into inanimate objects, which he tries to elevate, to bring nearer to himself. Artistic exaggeration with him is idealistic rather than materialistic. He loves nature because he has breathed life into her, and the sympathy that he receives from her is but a return of what he has given. He sees things colored by his own personality and they tend to become alive, more intimately associated with human activities, or symbolic of higher truths. He sees man and God

in nature, whereas the realist sees nature in man.

The comparison I have drawn between Balzac and Victor Hugo is dangerous if we attempt to draw from it definite and generalized conclusions, but it is at least suggestive to any one who is trying to formulate Balzac's relation to the romantic school. By the side of the idealistic figures you will find in the works of Victor Hugo as many if not more materialistic figures, from which, *but the proportion is much smaller than in Balzac, nor do we find in it the most striking of his fantastic creations, as is the case with Balzac* being a great poet, he obtains poetic effects; the contrast to Balzac is merely a matter of proportion. But the fact that the idealistic figures are almost negligible in Balzac, would indicate that, in spite of his many romantic traits, he lacks a certain attitude towards nature, which is characteristic of the romantic authors from Rousseau on, and which finds such a striking manifestation in the figures of Victor Hugo. There is a corresponding difference when we consider the characters. The romanticist infused his own nature into his creations, and having but one ego, his various characters were really one and the same. Only the conditions changed. Hence a sameness with the individual authors, which extended to the movement, in as much as the various authors had similar natures and aspirations; thus we can speak now of the romantic hero as of a single type. This process is the exception with Balzac. His ego is continually obtruding itself in his work, but it is either distinct from or subordinate to the characters. While the romanticists raised their characters up to their idealized selves, Balzac attained a similar result, without impairing his creative power, by lowering himself as it were to the plane of those whom he described. He had the dramatic power of putting himself in their places, living their lives and thinking their thoughts. Balzac had a susceptible nature and being subjected to the same

general influences as the romantic authors he could hardly escape sharing some of their traits, but the fundamental cast of his mind is almost wholly realistic. He is related to the romantic school rather by emotional traits and superficial literary artifices.

RELATIONS BETWEEN BALZAC'S FIGURES AND HIS IDEAS.

In his article on Stendhal, Balzac distinguished three types of contemporary literature : "la littérature des images," chiefly lyric represented by Hugo, Chateaubriand, Lamartine, Obermann, Gautier and others; "la littérature des idées," dealing largely with facts and headed by Stendhal, Musset and Merimee; and "l'eclectisme littéraire," a combination of the two -- "le lyrisme et l'action... une vue totale des choses... les images et les idées, l'idée dans l'image ou l'image dans l'idée." This last school, in which he places Scott, Cooper, Madame de Staël, and George Sand, is his own, for "je ne crois pas la peinture de la société moderne possible par le procédé sévère de la littérature du XVII^e et du XVIII^e siècle . L'introduction de l'élément dramatique de l'image, du tableau, de la description, du dialogue me paraît indispensable dans la littérature moderne"(1) This analysis, true in its general outlines, is

Ouvrage de Balzac
(1) Vol. XXIII, pp. 687 ff.

especially apt in so far as it concerns Balzac himself, for in his work we find a striking mingling of emotion and ideas, of imagination and facts. We are interested here in his powerful imagination and his abundance of ideas; for as he intimates himself, both ideas and imagination find expression in the figures of speech.

If we examine the figures of Victor Hugo we find that they reduce themselves in large measure to what we may call pure imagery plus imagination; in other words the external appearance of objects plays a most important part in his figurative creation, which consists frequently in the mere association of two concrete images; and when imagination enters to any considerable extent it is as pure imagination, which seeks a more subtle, fanciful, or symbolic criterion of comparison. Both processes may be illustrated

by a beautiful figure in the Charts du Spreysenble, (No. XIV) a drop of water glistening in the sunlight at the end of a blade of grass is a pearl, when it falls it is mud; the striking contrast, the contamination of perfect purity he relates to woman, who also is "perle avant de tomber et fange apres la chute." Ideas, to be sure, are not absent from such a comparison, but the association of ideas which produces the figure results entirely from the operation of the imagination.

On the other hand, the figures of Balzac are usually the result of the fusion at white heat of imagination and ideas; his comparisons often result from certain ideas, and in turn they seem to confirm and develop these same ideas, to impose them more powerfully on the mind of Balzac; in fact it seems at times that the idea really originates in a banal figure. This fusion of imagery and ideas is dangerous, for the one is likely to be distorted to make it conform to the other, and with Balzac, as we shall see, it is usually the figure of speech that suffers in its subordination to the idea. Moreover, in order that a comparison should be effective, its meaning should readily be grasped by the reader, and, when it is based on a conception with which he is unfamiliar, it is sure to appear false and ridiculous.

We come now to a detailed study of the relation of ideas to figures, using our table as a guide. It is well to note here that the fact that such a classification as is there made should be so simple, and at the same time so nearly complete, is in itself an indication that there must be some clearly defined underlying principles which cause the figures to fall into these distinct groups. For our present purpose the lys dans la vallée is

by a beautiful figure in the Champs-Élysées (No. XIV) a drop of water glistening in the sunlight at the end of a blade of grass is a pearl, when it falls it is mud; the striking contrast, the combination of perfect purity he relates to woman, who also is "perle avant de tomber et large après la chute." Ideas, to be sure, are not exempt from such a comparison, but the association of ideas which produces the figure results entirely from the operation of the imagination.

On the other hand the figures of Rabelais are usually the result of the fusion of white heat of imagination and ideas; his comparisons often result from certain ideas, and in turn they seem to confirm and develop these same ideas, to impose them more forcibly on the mind of Rabelais; in fact it seems at times that the idea really originates in a casual figure. This fusion of imagery and ideas is dangerous, for the one is likely to be distorted to make it conform to the other, and with Rabelais, as we shall see, it is usually the figure of speech that sways in its subordination to the idea. The danger is that the meaning should really be grasped by the reader, and when it is based on a conception with which he is unfamiliar, it is sure to appear false and ridiculous.

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especially interesting, for, being intimately associated in the mind of the author with the études philosophiques it offers a most striking example of the fusion of ideas and imagination. Also in the figures of speech and in other manifestations of the same influences that produced them, we find an explanation for the miscarriage of this favorite child of Balzac's brain. We must get beneath the mere statement of materialism and natural idealism, for, from a certain point of view, he seems especially fitted for writing such a work. There is much in his nature that strikes us as poetic : he idealizes purity; always prepossessed with the feminine, he places woman just below the angels and worships her; in his letters, especially the earlier ones, he shows considerable delicacy of appreciation. Strange as it may seem, in a romanesque novel of his youth such as Argow le Pirate, where neither ideas nor figures played any important part, we find a young woman, who, while resembling in many ways Eugenie Grandet, through all her adventures retains more real feminine charm and delicacy.

When we approach the question of Balzac's system of thought we note at once a dominant principle expressed in literature, science and philosophy : the unity of creation -- a principle which appears under various aspects in the romantic philosophy, and one which, even considered abstractly, encourages figurative creation; for, if things have so many points of resemblance as to be conceived of as a single whole, a multitude of comparisons immediately present themselves to the mind. One of the happiest moments in Balzac's life was when he conceived the idea of joining all his works into a significant whole, and he always protested against their being judged on their individual merits. Also he would have humanity conform to the animal world, for, as he states

especially interesting, for, being intimately associated in the mind of the author with the single philosophy it offers a most striking example of the fusion of ideas and imagination. Also in the figures of speech and in other manifestations of the same influences that produced them, we find an explanation for the misapprehension of this favorite child of Balzac's brain. We must get beneath the mere statement of materialism and naturalism, look, for, from a certain point of view, he seems especially fitted for writing such a work. There is much in his nature that strikes us as poetic: he idealizes quickly; always prepossessed with the feminine, he places women just below the angels and worships her; in his letters, especially the earlier ones, he shows considerable delicacy of appreciation. Strange as it may seem, in a romance novel of his youth such as *Arthur et Lirio*, where neither ideas nor figures played any important part, we find a young woman, who, while resembling in many ways *Thérèse Grandet*, through all her adventures retains more real feminine charm and delicacy.

When we approach the question of Balzac's system of thought we note at once a dominant principle expressed in literature, science and philosophy: the unity of creation -- a principle which appears under various aspects in the romantic philosophy, and which, in its ultimate statement, amounts to a doctrine of creation; for, if things have so many points of resemblance as to be conceived of as a single whole, a multitude of comparisons immediately present themselves to the mind. One of the happiest moments in Balzac's life was when he conceived the idea of joining all his works into a significant whole, and he always protested against their being judged on their individual merits. Also he would have humbly conformed to the animal world, for, as he states

in the Avant-Propos : "Il n'y a qu'un animal." This idea he develops in the Etudes philosophiques, under the influence of Swedenborg, to show that man is but an intermediate stage of development between the animal and the angel. He may live on earth and partake largely of the nature of either; he may like Seraphite become so spiritualized that he loses practically all human traits even before he breaks the bonds of mortality and takes his place among the angels. Similarly the Recherche de l'absolu is based on the principle of the unity of the material world. All of these conceptions which floated vaguely in the minds of others, seemed to assume in the mind of Balzac a concrete or mathematical form. They were not theories but facts capable of scientific and artistic application.

The relation of this general theory to the figures in group I, as analyzed in Chapter I, is evident. Thirty odd of the comparisons of man to man consist in the substitution of a divine conception for a terrestrial one. Madame de Mortsauf is a sister of charity, a martyr, a saint, or even the deity. Felix offers his love as a priest at an altar; he drinks the tears of Henriette as he would drink the blood of Christ at the holy communion. Naturally I did not list the mere references to Henriette as an angel, for the idea is so banal that it is almost impossible to revive the figure; in the Lys dans la vallée the word ange almost supplants femme and is used as if it were entirely literal. Altogether there is a distastefully insistent confusion of the carnal and spiritual emotions. On the other hand, the comparison to animals is equally insistent, in accord with the theory of Balzac that "L'homme est composé de matière et d'esprit : l'animalité vient aboutir en lui et l'ange commence à lui." (1)

1889-90

(1) The dualistic view of the universe

The less frequent conception of the conformity of human and plant life is elaborated in twenty-seven figures; comparisons to physical objects, while expressing the same tendency, are more common- place and more natural, because they are usually based on evident and purely external similarities.

But more striking still is the manner in which Balzac relates the spiritual world with the physical and material, which may be explained by an examination of some of the specific formations of his theories.

Throughout all of Balzac's novels and correspondence we note a constant and absorbing interest in the sciences. He read widely, consulted living authorities, observed, and -- what is more significant--he pondered and theorized for himself. (1) His spe-

(1) Cf. Gohannes : Balzac's

cial inclination was towards the semi-sciences, the various forms of occultism and mysticism. Theories such as those of his beloved Lavater, Gall, and Mesmer naturally produce materialistic concep- tions: if the sentiments, desires and passions of a man can trans- form his body, that is, if they produce physical reactions, they are readily conceived of as possessing physical attributes. It ideas may be transmitted from one mind to another, or if the will of one man may be imposed on another by a mysterious force which we call animal magnetism, then the idea of the will must have a distinct

it not a material existence of its own. Balzac was especially in- terested in these subjects in his early years, when he wrote most of his early philosophical theories. They find their ultimate expression in Louis Lambert, from which I shall give a series of quotations:

"Ici-bas, tout est le produit d'une SUBSTANCE ETHEREE, base commune de plusieurs phenomenes connus sous les noms impropres d'electricite, chaleur, lumiere, fluide galvanique, magnetique, etc. L'universalite des transmutations de cette substance constitue ce qu'on appelle vulgairement la matiere... Le cerveau est le matras ou l'ANIMAL transporte ce que, suivant la force de cet appareil, chacune de ses organisations peut absorber de cette SUBSTANCE, et d'ou elle sort transformee en volonte. La volonte est un fluide (p. 137)⁹⁶; chimistes de la volonte (p. 50)³⁵; La volonte pouvait, par un mouvement tout contractile de l'etre interieur, s'amasser; puis par un autre mouvement etre projetee au dehors..., reagir sur les autres... les penetrer d'une essence etrangere a la leur (p. 51)⁴³; la volonte s'exerce par les organes vulgairement nommes les cinq sens qui ne sont qu'un seul, la faculte de voir (p. 137)⁹⁶; Le son, la couleur, le parfum et la forme ont une meme origine... la rensee qui tient a la lumiere d'exprime par la parole qui tient au son... La colere, comme toutes nos expressions passionnees, est un courant de la force humaine qui agit electriquement (p. 138)⁹⁷; l'attente ... n'est si douloureuse que par l'effet de la loi en vertu de laquelle le poids d'un corps est multiplie par sa vitesse." (p. 64)⁴⁵

The idea, briefly stated, is that there is but one substance, that all forms of matter, all forces that act on matter, all intellectual and spiritual attributes of man are really one and the same, the only difference being of quantity and condition of stability or movement. Hence will, thought, or passion is only another form of fluidity, light, or sound. The question arises as to how much of this Palzac really believed. His sister tells us

"Ici-mas, tout est le produit d'une substance éthérée, passive
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ment nommés les cinq sens qui ne sont qu'un seul la faculté de
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how much of this Hylas really believed. His sister tells us

that he put in the mouth of Louis Lambert many of his own opinions that were too advanced for personal expression (1) The

Oeuvres de H. de Balzac
(1) Vol. XXIV, p. 46 ~~XLVI~~

same ideas arise continually in his work both before and after. (2)

~~(2) Cf. Avant-Propos, Vol. I, especially p. 7 where he quotes Louis Lambert to explain his ideas.~~

He speaks in his own name in Ursule Mirouët : "La science des fluides, seul non qui convienne au magnétisme, si étroitement lié par la nature de ses phénomènes, à la lumière et à l'électricité... La phrénologie et la physiognomonie, la science de Gall et celle de Lavater, qui sont jumelles, dont l'une est à l'autre ce que la cause est à l'effet, démontreraient aux yeux de plus d'un physiologiste les traces du fluide insaisissable, base des phénomènes de la volonté, et d'où résultent les passions, les habitudes, les formes du visage et celle du crâne." (p. 67) ⁵⁵ A priest seeking to explain a dream of Ursule says : "Si les idées sont une création propre à l'homme, si elles subsistent en vivant d'une vie qui leur soit propre, elles doivent avoir des formes insaisissables à nos sens extérieurs, mais perceptibles à nos sens intérieurs quand ils sont dans certaines conditions. Ainsi les idées de votre parrain ^{peuvent} nous envelopper." (p. 271) ¹⁹²

We are forced to the conclusion that if Balzac did not believe in his theories he at least thought he did, for he expresses them here as a science that will complete if not replace the existing sciences, and is very positive with his affirmations in a letter to ^{Dr} ~~doctor~~ Moreau on the receipt of the latter's book on Le Génie et la Folie. (1) The extreme form of his ideas results

(1) Cited by Cabanès : Balzac Ignoré, p. 216

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(1) *Le Génie et la Folie*, p. 216

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(1) Cited by Gaboriau : *Balzac Ignorant*, p. 216

partly from his mania for logical explanation, which appears so frequently in his work and which is the fundamental principle of his psychological studies. His mind intuitively sought a plausible solution for the mysterious workings of thought and passion, and, when it fails him, his imagination begins to work, or, to be more exact, imagination and intellect work side by side. It seems more than probable that the former seized upon such expressions as le feu de l'amour, le feu d'un regard, and épancher sa tendresse, which in the form of the concrete image evoked by the banal figure, reacted on the mind of Balzac and gave form to his vague conceptions; for Balzac really invents very few comparisons, and his boldest figures are merely detailed developments of the idea expressed in the most banal figures of every day speech. We have already seen his views on the evoking power of words; we know also that in real life he had only to let his mind dwell upon an idea in order to be convinced of its truth. Gautier says of him :

"L'idée était si vive qu'elle devenait réelle en quelque sorte; ^e parlait-il d'un diner, il le mangeait en le racontant; d'une voiture, il en sentait sous lui les moelleux coussins sans secousse."

~~for~~ *the theories are the result, then, of a species of auto-intoxication*

(2) Portraits contemporains, p. 90

~~The~~ ^{thus the} figures ~~then~~ are not mere suggestions of symbolic significance, but they have a logical basis of similarity; for even if Balzac in his saner moments would laugh at his theories he had at least conceived of them as realities, and the figures must represent the existence or the reminiscence of a concrete image. The reaction of theory on figure and of figure on theory had continued until his treatment of humanity is a kind of composite treatise on botany, zoology, physiology, hydraulics, optics, mechanics, etc. Notice in

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 more exact, imagination and intellect work side by side. It seems
 as if the intellect is the master and the imagination the servant.
 which in the form of the concrete image evoked by the panel fig-
 ure, reacted on the mind of Picasso and gave form to his vague con-
 ceptions; for Picasso really invents very few comparisons, and his
 boldest figures are merely detailed developments of the ideas ex-
 pressed in the most banal figures of every day speech. We have
 already seen his views on the evoking power of words; we know also
 that in real life he had only to let his mind dwell upon an idea
 in order to be convinced of its truth. Another says of him :
 "His ideas start at five o'clock, develop in an endless series,
 persist all day long, and, if he manages to be in contact with them, he
 turns, in an instant, into a mosaic consisting of many elements."
 (27) *the human mind is a mosaic, made of a few elements*
 The figures themselves are not mere suggestions of symbolic significance,
 but they have a logical basis of similarity; for even if Picasso in
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 treatment of humanity is a kind of composite treatise on botany,
 zoology, physiology, hydraulics, optics, mechanics, etc. Notice in

the following passage from Louis Lambert the multitude of forms
 in which a ~~idea~~ ^{thought} presents itself to his mind :

"Tout à coup une idée s'elance, passe avec la rapidité de l'éclair à travers les espaces infinis dont la perception nous est donnée par notre vue intérieure. Cette idée brillante, surgie comme un feu follet, s'éteint sans retour; existence éphémère, pareille à celle de ces enfants qui font connaître aux parents une joie et en cha grin sans bornes; espèce de fleur mort-née dans les champs de la pensée. Parfois l'idée, au lieu de jaillir avec force et de nourrir sans consistance, commence à poindre dans les limbes inconnus des organes où elle prend naissance; elle nous use par un long enfantement, se développe, devient féconde, grandit au dehors dans la grace de la jeunesse et parée de tous les attributs d'une longue vie; elle soutient les plus curieux regards, elle les attire, et ne les lasse jamais; l'examen qu'elle provoque commande l'admiration que ^s excitent les œuvres longtemps élaborées. Tantôt les idées naissent par essaim, l'une entraîne l'autre, elles s'enchainent, toutes sont agaçantes, elles abondent, elles sont folles. Tantôt elles se lèvent pâles, confuses, déperissent faute de force ou d'aliments; la substance génératrice manque. Enfin à certains jours, elles se précipitent dans les abîmes pour en éclairer les immenses profondeurs; elles nous épouvantent et laissent notre âme altative. Les idées sont en nous un système complet, semblable à l'un des règnes de la nature, une sorte de floraison dont l'iconographie sera retracée par un homme de génie qui passera pour un fou peut-être. Qui, tout, en nous et au dehors, atteste la vie de ces créations ravissantes que je compare à des fleurs, en obéissant à je ne sais quelle révélation de leur nature! Leur production

the following passage from Louis Lambert the multitude of forms in which a thought presents itself to his mind :

"Tout a coup une idée s'élançait, passait avec la rapidité de l'éclair à travers les espaces infinis dont la perception nous est donnée par notre vue intérieure. Cette idée brillante, angélique comme un feu follet, s'éteint sans retour; existence éphémère, pareille à celle de ces enfants qui font connaître aux parents une joie et en ont griné sans bonté; espace de l'instinct mort-né dans les champs de la pensée. Partout l'idée, au lieu de jaillir avec force et de nourrir sans constance, commence à pointer dans les limbes inconnus des organes ou elle prend naissance; elle nous mène par un long entêtement, se développe, devient féconde, grandit au dehors dans la grâce de la jeunesse et parée de tous les attributs d'une longue vie; elle sentent les plus curieux regards, elle les attire, et ne les laisse jamais; l'examen qu'elle provoque commande l'admiration que suscitent les œuvres longtemps élaborées. Tantôt les idées naissent par essaim, l'une entraîne l'autre, elles s'entraînent, les idées sont éphémères, elles sont folles. Tantôt elles se lèvent seules, connues, dépassant toute de force ou d'aliments; la substance génératrice manque. Enfin à certains jours, elles se précipitent dans les abîmes pour en éclairer les immenses profondeurs; elles nous épouvantent et laissent notre ame ébahie. Les idées sont en nous un système complet, semblable à l'un des règnes de la nature, une sorte de floraison dont l'éclosion géographique sera retracée par un homme de génie qui passera tout un jour peut-être. Oui, tout, en nous et au dehors, atteste la vie de ces créations ravissantes que je compare à des fleurs, en observant à je ne sais quelle révélation de leur nature: leur production

comme l'in de nombre n'est d'ailleurs pas plus etdorante que celle
des parfums et des couleurs dans la plante. Les parfums sont des
idées peut-être (p. 62⁴⁴ 63)

The central thought is that ideas have a distinct though dependent existence, and the comparison that dominates throughout the passage is that of a child in its birth and development. But interwoven in this minutely developed metaphor, we have other terms applied to ideas such as feu follet, fleur, jaillir, poindre, œuvres, essaim, eclairer, système, floraison, and parfums. The passage offers a most interesting example of the fusion of science and imagination and of the class of figure that is likely to result from such a fusion.

In the *Lys dans la vallée* we find Balzac still obsessed by the ideas upheld so stoutly in *Louis Lambert*; but in the *Lys dans la vallée* we have not the scientific expression of theories, but figures of speech which reflect those theories in the choice of the comparisons. An examination of the table will show to what extent the imagination of Balzac was influenced by his semi-scientific conceptions. It is not necessary to dwell on the figures drawn from fluids and flames. They have already been analysed (1) and

(1) ^{5 upre} See above, pp. 21-3

their relation to what has been said is sufficiently evident. It would naturally be impossible to deduce from each figure a definite scientific conception, but on the other hand Balzac's scientific theories are themselves more than hazy. In theory and figure we find the same attitude of mind and the same channels of thought. In both we find the elaboration of the idea expressed frequently in banal metaphors; this is especially true as regards flames or

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comparisons. An examination of the table will show to what extent
the imagination of Balzac was influenced by his semi-scientific
conceptions. It is not necessary to dwell on the figures drawn
from fluids and flames. They have already been analysed (1) and
(1) See above, p.

their relation to what has been said is sufficiently evident. It
would naturally be impossible to deduce from each figure a definite
scientific conception, but on the other hand Balzac's scientific
theories are themselves more than happy. In theory and figure we
find the same attitude of mind and the same channels of thought.
In both we find the elaboration of the idea expressed frequently
in formal metaphors; this is especially true as regards flames or

of fire, which appears in various every-day expressions denoting thought, truth, joy, love, anger, despair, or pain. Balzac as a rule rarely elaborates and intensifies. The assimilation of the spiritual to the physiological side of man shown in eighty-three figures is one of the most fundamental ideas of Balzac and one of his most common literary devices. It is the underlying principle of the citations I have given from Louis Lambert and Ursule Mirouet. The very numerous comparisons to flowers ^{do} not seem to depend on any definitely formulated theory; they seem rather to be used because the idea is essentially a poetic one, which Balzac thought he could make still more poetic by elaborating it and carrying it out in detail. Throughout the whole book he is obsessed by this flower motif, which in the other novels is relatively infrequent. It is evidently a case of auto-intoxication, produced probably by the very title of the book. It is interesting in this connection to compare some of the expressions which Balzac uses in his letters in speaking of Madame de Berny, on whom he modeled the character of Madame de Mortsauf. There are two that are especially striking by their similarity with figures already quoted from the Lys dans la vallee: "A tout moment la mort peut m'enlever un ange, qui a veillé sur moi pendant quatorze ans, une fleur de ^{aussi} droiture, que jamais le monde n'a touchée et qui était mon étoile (1) (cf. the mixed figure

(1) Lettres à l'Etrangère, Vol. I, p. 220

un fleur sidérale (IV. p. ⁴³⁷ 237 and others); "Madame de B... qui de son côté, penche la tête comme une fleur dont le calice est chargé d'eau (2) (cf. Penchant la tête comme un lys trop chargé de pluie, 57 (IV. p. 254))

(2) Ibid, p. 161

Let us study a little more closely the artistic result of this fusion of ideas and imagination in the Lys dans la vallee. The novel

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 ame de Mortsauf. There are two that are especially striking by
 their similarity with figures already noted from the two dams in
 Vallee: "A tout moment il sortait quelque chose d'ange, d'un ange, d'un ange."
 and not pendant qu'elle etait, une fleur de fleur, une fleur de fleur, une fleur de fleur.
 (1) Lettres a L. de Mortsauf, Vol. I, p. 220
 and in their letters (-V. p. 22) and others: "Madame de Remy... and de
 son coté, pendant la tete comme une fleur dont le calice est change
 d'un (2) (3) pendant la tete comme un lys trop change de fleur
 (IV. p. 222) (2) Ibid, p. 121
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is related in the mind of Balzac to the Etudes philosophiques and resembles Seraphita especially, Madame de Mortsauf being a woman only a little less idealized and spiritualized than Seraphita. The purpose of the majority of the figures of the Lys dans la vallee, then, is to idealize, to produce a poetical impression, but his scientific theories dominate, glide in and spoil the effect. It is not only that the figures conform to the realistic tendency towards the concrete expression of the abstract and the comparison of higher to lower life. Though this is opposed to the elevating tendency of the figurative creations of romantic idealism, such comparisons as a woman to a flower or passion to a rushing wave are frequently used with poetic effect. But they must be used with discretion as regards number and form; one must be content to dwell lightly on actual similarities, to confine one's self to a comparison of the abstract qualities present in both terms, to imbue the material object with symbolic significance. Balzac by introducing too many physical details into his figures destroys the poetic as well as the idealistic impression which he intended to produce. Take, for instance, the very pretentious comparison of the soul to a flower, by which Felix begins the story of his life. It represents the roots as reaching down into the domestic soil and finding only hard stones, the first leafage as stripped off by des mains haineuses, and the flowers as killed by the frost just as they are beginning to open. (LV. r. 2) ³⁹⁴ all this is very logical and exhaustively analytic, but it is not poetical.

Such expressions result from the clearness with which Balzac visualized his comparisons. Even when we meet, in the midst of real figures, such a banal expression as : "Après le soupir

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Such expressions result from the clearness with which Palao visualized his comparisons. Even when we meet, in the midst of real figures, such a banal expression as: "Adres is soupy"

naturel aux coeurs purs au moment où s'ils s'ouvrent" (LV. p. ⁴⁵~~47~~),
 we cannot but think that this bit of dubious psychology may owe
 its origin to the association of a mournful sound with something
 that opens -- a door or an oyster; and certainly when Felix says
 that seated beside Madame de Mortsauf seeking a "moment où je re
 glissera dans son coeur" ^{10.6-48}... j'avais fini par entendre en elle
 des remuements d'entrailles causés par une affection qui voulait
 sa place" (LV. 7. 74-75), he, that is Balzac, conceives of love as some-
 thing which, excluded from its rightful place in the heart of Mad-
 ame de Mortsauf, disturbs the other organs in its frantic efforts
 to enter there. We have already remarked that figures based on
 unfamiliar scientific conceptions are likely to become obscure
 and ridiculous. Thus the basal conception of a figure may be so
 evident to the mind of Balzac that he does not realize the neces-
 sity of indicating it for the benefit of his readers. In describ-
 ing Lady Dudley he says : Son corps ignore la sueur, il aspire le
 feu dans l'atmosphère et vit dans l'eau sous peine de ne pas vivre
 (LV. p. ⁵⁶⁸~~250~~). A veritable Chinese riddle, the solution of which, how-
 ever, seems to be suggested ^{later} on the ^{same} ~~next~~ page, where Lady Dudley is
 compared to an African desert, and then contrasted to Madame de
 Mortsauf : "L'orient et l'occident : l'une attirant à elle les
 moindres parcelles humides pour s'en nourrir; l'autre exudant son
 ardeur, enveloppant ses fidèles d'une lumineuse atmosphère." The basis
 of both is evidently the conception of the emotions and passions
 as fluids and flames. Madame de Mortsauf exudes her soul in a sort
 of liquid flame for the use of others; while Lady Dudley takes and
 gives nothing in return, she replenishes her flaring passion from
 without and must live in an atmosphere humid with the emotions of

natural and objects with an element of still a 'movement' (IV. p. 147).
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 of liquid flame for the use of others; while Lady Dudley takes and
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 without and must live in an atmosphere brimful with the emotions of

others in order to satisfy that passion. To be complete, Balzac adds that her very body does not perspire, thus affirming the interpretation of the physiological and spiritual natures.

Such expressions smack too strongly of the earthy to produce the poetic impression that Balzac desired; he is not satisfied with describing a sentimental reaction by comparing it with the sentiment aroused in the mind by the consideration of a physical object or reaction. When he draws a comparison from a flower, the image takes substance; he sees the roots and the soil around them, the green of the leaves; he smells the perfume of the blossoms and sees them glistening with dew, beaten by the rain, bedraggled with mud, dried by the sun and by the lack of sap, or picked to pieces by the birds. Such a vision is a gift, it is in this power of evocation that consists the genius of Balzac. But this evocation of material details is suitable only for those works which we call realistic, and when Balzac comes out of his natural domain and deals with more spiritualized subjects, this evocation necessarily takes on a more figurative aspect. Hence there are more figures, and they are out of harmony with the subject. Balzac seems to be dimly conscious of the contradiction existing between the two phases of his work when he says in Louis Lambert : "Peut-être les mots matérialisme et spiritualisme expriment-ils les deux cotes d'un seul et même fait." (p. 32) ²⁷⁻⁸ A justifiable supposition as far as he was concerned; for when you affirm the supremacy of the spiritual side of man, you have to bring it down to the level of matter before you can explain how it can act on matter, ^{and control} unless you are content to leave the connection shrouded in mist and calmly say : "I do not know," which Balzac was not content to do. In his world, then, the spiritual may rule, but this is itself so absolutely the result of

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spiritual manifests itself as absolutely the result of

physiological and material influences that one seems to see a negation of spiritualism, of soul, and of moral responsibility.

The *Lys dans la vallée*, in Balzac's day, was very popular in certain circles, and we still find critics who speak of it as a masterpiece. But the figures, which represent the general tone of the books, are disconcerting to our moral and aesthetic sensibilities, being unsuited to the subject. The reason is evidently that Balzac, while constantly urging us to mount the heights with him, is at the same time steeping us in materialism: a mixture of the purest water and the best earth results none the less in mud. Furthermore we are often confused by a mingling of incompatible elements, fused into a single figure. One moment a passion is a flower and the next it is a star, now a liquid and then a flame. The explanation of these defects is to be found in the complete fusion which takes place in the mind of Balzac between his ideas or theories and his imagination, resulting in figures, which for Balzac are not mere symbols, but expressions of real similarity or even identity. He fails apparently to distinguish between the literal and the figurative. Such a process of creation was not conducive to the artistry and restraint that the idealized subject demanded.

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Chapter VI

THE STYLE OF BALZAC JUDGED ACCORDING TO ITS EFFECTIVENESS.

The purpose of this last chapter is not primarily to justify the stylistic faults that we have noted and others that have been so often pointed out; it is an attempt to explain certain sensations experienced in reading Balzac, which linger with us and yet which strike us as surprising when, in our more critical moments, we judge him by the ordinary literary standards. Can we say that it is only the content of Balzac's novels that pleases and that the favorable impression is lessened by the style? Is the style a liability and not an asset? Being convinced that the impression produced by the works of Balzac would be impossible if there were not considerable conformity between the style and the subject, if the form and the content were not working to the same end, I have sought to isolate certain elements that offer a psychological explanation of the effect on the reader. (1)

- (1) Cf. E. Paul Flat, Seconds essais sur Balzac for the same subject treated by him from ^a slightly different angle.

In estimating the merits of the various imaginative processes of Balzac, we have already had occasion to broach the subject of this chapter by noting and explaining the impression that is made by the figures; and, as has been seen, such a discussion naturally extends itself at times to a more general consideration of style, in as much as the figures are frequently the most striking and the most concrete manifestations of general stylistic tendencies. The impression made on the reader is a still more complex problem than that of the origin of the style, for another psychological element is introduced. Yet this element must be taken into consideration, for the very term style presupposes

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(1) The first element is the subject, which is treated by him from a slightly different angle. In estimating the merits of the various imaginative processes of Palazo, we have already had occasion to broach the subject of this chapter by noting and explaining the impression that is made by the figures; and, as has been seen, such a discussion naturally extends itself at times to a more general consideration of style, in as much as the figures are frequently the most striking and the most concrete manifestations of general stylistic tendencies. The impression made on the reader is a still more complex problem than that of the origin of the style, for another psychological element is introduced. Yet this element must be taken into consideration, for the very term style presupposes

an audience : just as there is no sound without a hearer, there is no style unless there is someone to register the intellectual vibrations conveyed by the words. When a style is felt as good, it means that the author, his age, (usually), his subject, and the reader are in unison. An epic from the pen of Ronsard and a play of Moliere as read by Renan may be said to lack a necessary element of style which is present in a work of Chapelain in the hands of his contemporaries. As a consequence of these facts, any estimate of the style of an author must be largely personal, in so far as human nature varies. For this reason I cite frequently passages from critics, which though mere expressions of opinion, are of value when analysed and justified, in that they give us a basis for broader generalizations.

Herbert Spencer (1) holds that the best style is the

(1) The Philosophy of Style.

clearest, the one that requires the least effort on the part of the reader in order to grasp the meaning. About the same idea we find in the comments on style by Buffon (2), or Renan (3). Leaving aside

(2) Discours sur le style.

(3) Essais de critique et de morale, p. 341.

the question of literary tradition, such would naturally be the attitude of the philosopher or man of science, whose interest is centered in the transmission of ideas. The primary function of language is this transmission of abstract conceptions, and the simpler the style the more adequate and unencumbered is its operation on the mind. But the man who would use words to create life and matter has to rival with nature and with the arts that appeal more directly to the senses; he must use language in such a way that its functions are enlarged. The prime requisite in literary creation

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that aims at the representation of life is that it shall reproduce as vividly as possible in the mind of the reader the emotions, the concepts, and even the physical percepts of the author. If lucidity and beauty can be obtained at the same time, so much the better, but they remain secondary. The purpose is not that the reader should stop and admire the style, but that he should react according to the content.

The main difficulty is a tendency, especially for the hurried modern, to substitute words for ideas. This occurs in his speech as well as in his reading; it is with phrases that he talks politics, ^{and} discusses literature and art. An expression which is frequently heard becomes familiar and produces a certain reaction, a vague association of impressions received on former occasions. He does not stop to consider whether he knows the real meaning of the words. In most cases, if pressed for a definition, he would succeed in giving one approximately correct; but the word is a proxy, and the idea, ^{which is} never formulated, remains in a more or less chaotic stage.

Let us take the case of a man reading a piece of smooth correct prose, where every word stands in its proper and logical relation with every other word. The grammatical relations of the words coincide so perfectly with the psychological relations of the ideas that there is little incentive for him to go back of the individual words; without translating them into definite concepts, it is possible for him to grasp the trend of the idea of the whole. But often this abstract conception that he receives is not real but only a reflection of the words, which disappears soon after the words themselves. Pope solved the difficulty by expressing his

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ideas in a form that clings to the memory; a political party or a system of philosophy may have its existence prolonged by the coinage of a happy phrase; but without the wording the idea merges into that mass of what may be called potential concepts. An exaggerated form of the tendency mentioned above is found in the case of a reader whose concentration is poor. He may read a paragraph aloud even, and at the end have no idea of what he has read. It would seem that the pronunciation was purely mechanical and the words absolutely void of meaning, but for the negative reaction of the mind when the attention is arrested by an unfamiliar word. Moreover as he goes back to reread the paragraph, the words themselves have a familiar look and sound, showing that the visual and auditory memory was functioning. The same phenomenon is involved when you suddenly realize that you have been hearing a bit of song or verse for years without having any real comprehension of its meaning, when a verse of the Bible is flooded with significance by personal experience or by merely reading it in a foreign language.

Thus it is possible for the clearest style to be the least effective : it runs so smoothly through the labor-saving machine of our brain, that we do not feel the necessity of translating it into definite concepts capable of leaving an impression. Various incentives to this translation are used : the orator has his tone and gestures, the author the mechanical devices of capitals, italics, and paragraphing; both can use rhetorical devices to focus the attention of the reader or hearer : interrogation, repetition, climax, etc., which are mere external elements of composition ; or antithesis, irony, and hyperbole, which produce a mental reaction in the mind of the reader by making him adjust the author's statement in order to discover just the *whole meaning* which the author wished to convey.

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Similar in their effect to these last are the simile and the metaphor, which are, however, much superior, in that they are capable of infinite variety and rejuvenation. Any one of the other figures, being the same wherever you find it, loses quickly its spice of novelty, and by frequent use becomes as ineffective as the mathematical statement. The simile and metaphor, whose stylistic value we discussed from a slightly different point of view in Chapter III, have the advantage of keeping the mind alert; they present a difficulty ^{in solving} ~~by the solution~~ of which the reader becomes active rather than passive, and participates in the mental processes of the author. Take, for instance, the expression of social service as human irrigation. Irrigation does not fit in with our line of thought, our attention is arrested, this word must be translated and assimilated before we can pass on. An image arises; we think of the vast enterprise that is turning the western deserts into flowering gardens; in order to relate this to social service, the mind must also produce a definite and detailed image of what the latter means. Then we see that the slums with their infinite possibilities of manhood, undeveloped on account of conditions, are like the deserts, and that the waters which will bring these hidden qualities to the proper flower and fruitage are sanitation, education, economic justice etc.

A figure, then, unless entirely banal, requires not only that the reader should formulate a mental image, but that he should analyze it sufficiently to find the points of similarity with the object of the comparison. Not only does he use his own faculties to interpret the author's expression, thus impressing the ideas more forcibly on his consciousness, but, if the figure is well chosen, he should be able to grasp the unexpressed ideas of the author or

Similar in their effect to these last are the simile and the metaphor, which are, however, more important, in that they are co-figures, being the same whenever you find it, loses quickly its affect of novelty, and by frequent use becomes as ineffective as the metaphoric statement. The simile and metaphor, whose stylistic value we discussed from a slightly different point of view in Chapter III have the advantage of keeping the mind alert; they present a different than passive, and participates in the mental processes of the author. Take, for instance, the expression of social service as human irrigation. Irrigation does not fit in with our line of thought, our attention is arrested, this word must be translated and assimilated before we can pass on. An image arises; we think of the vast enterprise that is turning the western deserts into flowering gardens; in order to relate this to social service, the mind must also produce a definite and detailed image of what the latter means. Then we see that the simile with their infinite possibilities of meaning, developed on account of conditions, are like the deserts, and that the waters which will bring these hidden qualities to the proper flower and fruitage are sanitation, education, economic justice, etc.

A figure, then, unless entirely banal, requires not only that it be analyzed to find the points of similarity with the object of the comparison. Not only does he use his own facilities to interpret the author's expression, thus impressing the ideas more forcibly on his consciousness, but, if the figure is well chosen, he should be able to grasp the unexpressed ideas of the author or

even to go beyond into original creation. Not all the effect is lost, however, if the comparison is only partially apt; the purpose of the figure is usually clear, while on the other hand the reader must call into play his mental faculties and analyze the impression that the author wished to give, before he can pronounce judgment on the propriety of the expression; thus the idea may be conveyed almost as forcibly as by a more exact expression.

Balzac's figures of speech are merely one manifestation of his desire for a more adequate representation of life. He feels the necessity of something that shall keep the minds of his readers alert; he writes in a kind of feverish excitement, and he does not want a purely passive reader. A propos of the *Physiologie du mariage*, he says : "Il me fallait donc envelopper mes idées et les rouler, pour ainsi dire, dans une forme nouvelle, acerbé et piquant, qui reveillât les esprits en leur laissant des réflexions à méditer;" (1) similarly he speaks admiringly of an article of Lucien

(1) Correspondance p.97

de Rubempré "écrite dans cette manière nouvelle et originale où la pensée résultait du choc des mots, où le cliquetis des adjectifs et des adjectifs reveillât l'attention." (2) In this connection a

(2) Illusions perdues, ~~II, p. 128~~ p. 453

facetious description which Balzac gives of his manner of composition is worthy of being cited : "Le café tombe dans votre estomac...; des lors tout s'agite; les idées s'ébranlent comme les bataillons de la Grande Armée sur le terrain d'une bataille, et la bataille a lieu. Les souvenirs arrivent au pas de charge, enseignes déployées; la cavalerie légère des comparaisons se développe par un magnifique galop; l'artillerie de la logique accourt avec son train et ses gorgousses; les traits d'esprit arrivent en

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Haitian's figures of speech are merely one manifestation

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pensée résultait du choc des mots, ou la clignette des yeux et
de l'écriture "écrite dans cette manière nouvelle et originale ou la

un magnifique soleil; l'artillerie de la brigade accourt avec son train et ses gargousses; les troupes d'assaut arrivent en

tirailleurs; les figures se dressent, le papier se couvre d'encre, car la lutte commence et finit par des torrents d'eau noire, comme la bataille par sa poudre noire." (1) These citations indicate a

(1) Traité des excitants modernes, Vol. XX, p. 623

rather physical conception of the elements of style, a belief that the attention may be aroused by the mere form and juxtaposition of the words; and he is ready to use every weapon at his disposal to storm the citadel of his reader's intelligence.

Many of Balzac's predecessors and contemporaries had felt the need of leaving the traditional paths of composition in the search for a more adequate expression, but Balzac, by his example if not by theory, remains a pioneer among the greater writers of the nineteenth century; and, though there is no Balzacian school of style, his influence is evident to one who compares the style of the novel before and after him. In the novel itself he brought about a great revolution; he attempted a corresponding revolution in the language, (2) but language, being the common property of the

(2) Brunot in Petit de Juv^{re}ville, op. cit. Vol. VIII

nation and in daily use by every one, is necessarily more bound by tradition than a literary genre. To allow an author all the liberties that Balzac wished to take, would mean anarchy and chaos, and would defeat the very purpose of language as a medium of intellectual exchange. But when Balzac protested against the inflexibility of language he was voicing an idea that meant a progression and rejuvenation, an idea which was in the air, but which the other great writers were timid about putting in practice; Balzac was impelled to do so by the very nature of his genius. In the more artistic styles of Flaubert, Zola, and the Goncourts we find many of his

timidités; les figures se dressent, le papier se colore d'émotion, car la lutte commence et l'instinct par des formes d'émotion, comme la bataille par sa propre nature." (1) These citations indicate a

(1) *Traité des exaltations* de Voltaire, Vol. IX, p. 682

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(2) *Précis de l'histoire de la littérature*, Vol. VIII

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procédes, while on the other hand they have profited by his errors, which showed them certain things to be avoided. But it was Balzac who proved that one may ignore upon occasion the conventionalities of art, aesthetics and language, and at the same time write powerfully and effectively; and when we see that so many of his imitators, in smoothing off his rough edges, have lost some of the best traits of his creation, we are tempted to believe with Brunetiere that his faults may really be the condition of his genius.

For the style of Balzac can grip even those who are hostile, who struggle against his seduction. We have already cited the case of Sainte-Beuve; (1) here is an additional testimony in which

(1) See above p.

style is specifically mentioned: "Et malgré tout, il y a dans ce style une puissance de sensualisme, plus encore que le réalisme, qui vous domine, vous entraîne, malgré les revoltes du goût. A travers cette incorrecte et laborieuse prolixité, ces trivialités recherchées, cette affectation du détail ignoble et bas, on sent dans ce style une verve intérieure, intarissable, et dans l'écrivain ce qu'on a si bien appelé le diable au corps. Et si le diable au corps ne donne à personne ni la grande éloquence, ni la grande poésie, il peut donner, il donne à Balzac, dans tout ce qu'il écrit, je ne sais quelle impérieuse magie et quel prestige qui domptent les esprits les plus rebelles et s'imposent irrésistablement à la curiosité si non à la sympathie." (2) E. Caro, *Poètes et Romanciers*, p. 368

Brunetiere, who is more favorably inclined towards Balzac, analyzes the causes of his power: "Dans le roman comme au théâtre, nous nous sommes aperçus que le style ne consistait essentiellement ni dans une correction dont le mérite, en scène, ne va pas au delà de

proposed, while on the other hand they have profited by his errors, which showed them certain things to be avoided. But it was Balzac who proved that one may ignore upon occasion the conventionalities of art, aesthetics and language, and at the same time write powerfully and effectively; and when we see that so many of

the best critics of his creation are tempted to believe with Flaubert that his faults may really be the condition of his genius.

For the style of Balzac can vary even more than his personality, who struggles against his heredity. We have already cited the case of *Le Père Goriot*; (1) there is an additional testimony in which (1) See above p.

style is specifically mentioned: "Le Père Goriot, il y a dans ce style une connaissance de la langue, plus exacte que de la réalité, qui vous entraîne, malgré les révoltes du goût. A travers cette incertitude et l'obscurité, les trinités, les chutes, cette affectation de détail, l'hygiène et pas, on sent dans ce style une vraie intensité, l'intensité, et dans l'écriture on trouve à la fois l'appel à la clarté et la clarté en corps. Il y a une grande élévation, ni la grande élévation, ni la grande élévation, il y a une élévation, dans tout ce qu'il écrit, je ne sais quelle impétuosité, et quel prestige qui démontre les esprits les plus rebelles et l'impétuosité irrésistible. La courtoisie et non la sympathie. (J. E. Caro, *Œuvres complètes*, p. 228)

Flaubert, who is more favourably inclined towards Balzac, analyses the causes of his power: "Tous les romans connus au théâtre, nous sommes habitués que le style ne consistait essentiellement dans une correction dont le mérite, en somme, ne va pas au delà de

savoir mettre l'orthographe; ni sans une ~~une~~ facilité, dans abondance, dans un flux de discours qui finissent -- ainsi la prose de George Sand -- par donner la sensation de la monotonie ; ni sans cette écriture artiste qui a fait le desespoir de Flaubert, mais peut-être et uniquement dans le don de faire vivant. Ou plutôt encore : faire vivant, voilà, messieurs, ce que l'artiste moderne se propose avant tout ! C'est là-dessus que nous le jugeons ; c'est ce qui assure, en dépit des maîtres d'école, la durée de son œuvre ; et en ce sens, Messieurs, le style, tel que les grammairiens l'entendent, n'est et ne doit être qu'un moyen... La vie est quelque chose de mêlé, je ne vois pourquoi je ne dirais quelque chose de trouble. Elle est le mouvement qui "dérange les lignes." Elle est confusion, désordre, illogisme, irrégularité. Rien n'est plus divers, et rien n'est plus complexe. On l'altère en la simplifiant ; on l'éteint en la fixant. Changer, muer, évoluer, c'en est la définition même. On ne la saisit un moment, on ne nous en donne l'imitation, l'image, la sensation qu'en se faisant soi-même aussi changeant, pour ainsi dire, aussi souple, ondoyant qu'elle. C'est ce que Molière, Saint-Simon, et Balzac ont essayé de faire... C'est aussi l'idée que nous pouvons opposer hardiment à toutes les critiques que l'on a faites ou que l'on fera du style de Balzac." (2)

(3) Études, Critiques, Vol. VII, pp. 299-300

Judged from this point of view the effectiveness of a style may be even enhanced by its being at times incorrect. Mere perfection is monotonous, insipid like an over-ripe fruit, while the incorrect, as abnormal and unusual,

(3) *Frühling, April, Mai, Juni, Juli, August, September, Oktober, November, Dezember*

incorrect, as abnormal and unnatural
perfection is monotonous, insipid like an over-ripe fruit, while the
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judged from this point of view the effectiveness of a

arrests the attention, and if the meaning is still clear, the impression may be more lasting, ^{more over} and as Brunetiere says a certain irregularity and confusion gives what might be called an onomatopoeic representation of life. But it requires more genius to be unconventional and effective than to be conventional and correct. The incorrect is not something to be imitated, it must grow up out of the nature of the author and the requirements of his subject, it is personal and human, and through being so it is more appealing. Certain idiosyncrasies of language leave gaps through which we can catch glimpses of the author. A sober faultless style would give us a very imperfect idea of Balzac, his powerful personality and childlike naiveness, his exuberant imagination which brushes aside all restraints of refinement, his eternally active and self-intoxicating mind, his all pervasive sensuality -- and after all Balzac is the most interesting character in the Comedie humaine. When we balk at the style, it is really the man that is distasteful to us. To borrow from the philosophy of La Rochefoucauld, perfection may be said to be oppressive, painful to our amour-propre; while there is a certain pleasure in being able to pick flaws in genius; they seem to excuse some of our own, and -- to be a little more optimistic concerning human nature -- they give us more of a fellow-feeling, a more comprehending sympathy for the author. Balzac's excesses in other directions may well result in some measure from his continual use of figures of speech. When you speak of the arms of a tree the expression is strictly speaking incorrect, and the habit of using words in other than their normal sense tends to make one careless about meanings and relations. Balzac came to feel himself a master of language, which

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relations. Balzac came to feel himself a master of language, which

he could mould as putty for his purposes; from this feeling of mastery to a tendency to abuse there is but a step.

An idea intimated by Brunetiere in the above quoted passage, is more definitely expressed by Hippolyte Castille : "On lit un roman de M. de Balzac avec ce genre d'interet que l'on prend à regarder passer l'élément dans la rue."¹ And we do get something of the impression of dodging through a motley throng on a crowded street, where we see the woman in silks and furs jostling the laborer on his way home from work, the tired office girl and the giddy searchers after pleasure, the blind beggar and the young couple interested only in themselves; we hear the cry of the newsboy, the metallic notes of the hand-organ, mingled with the rattle of wheels; a pell-mell conglomeration of visual and auditory sensations. For some, such a scene has a strange fascination; others even find a morbid pleasure in roaring through the centers of poverty, disease, and insanity; still others prefer the solitude of their rooms or the smooth flow of conventional society. Literary tastes vary in the same way. It is true that a man may find pleasure in a book which deals with conditions that would be unbearable to him in real life; there is something of the lure of the unknown, which is denied external manifestation through pride, convention, physical or aesthetic barriers. Balzac goes slumming rather too often, but, when one has read enough of him to get the proper perspective, the general impression is of the plethora of variegated life that throngs the streets at certain hours of the day. The multiplicity and complexity of the impressions received by the author renders his style embarrassed and labored, but this fault, so easily avoided by one who has less to say

¹ *Le Lorrain*, Oct 4, 1846, cited by Bowenford, *Notre des oeuvres*

he could not be putty for his purposes; from this feeling of mastery to a tendency to abuse there is but a step.

An idea instigated by Rimbaud in the above quoted

passage, is more definitely expressed by Hippolyte Castille: "On lit un roman de M. de Balzac avec ce genre d'intérêt que l'on prend à regarder passer l'éclatante dans la rue." And we do get something of the impression of dodging through a motley throng on a crowded street, where we see the woman in silk and furs, hustling the laborer on his way home from work, the tired office girl and the elderly seersucker after pleasure, the blind beggar and the young couple interested only in themselves; we hear the cry of the newsboy, the metallic notes of the hand-organ, mingled with the rattle of wheels; a pell-mell commingling of visual and auditory sensations. But now, when a storm has a stormy look, others even find a morbid pleasure in looking through the centers of poverty, disease, and insanity; still others prefer the solitude of their rooms or the smooth flow of conventional society. Literary tastes vary in the same way. It is true that a man may find pleasure in a book which deals with conditions that would be unbearable to him in real life; there is something of the lure of the unknown, which is denied external manifestation through pride, convention, physical or aesthetic barriers. Balzac goes swimming rather too often, but, when one has read enough of him to get the proper perspective, the general impression is of the plethora of variegated life that throngs the streets at certain hours of the day. The multiplicity and complexity of the impressions received by the author renders his style expressed and labored, but this fault, so easily avoided by one who has less to say

ceases to be a fault when it helps to reproduce in the mind of the reader the impression of the author.

We have spoken much of the materialism of Balzac, and not in a laudatory manner, but this very materialism, mixed as it is with a certain amount of idealism, intensifies the illusion of life. A poetic character attracts us, appeals to our better natures, but we are reminded rather of what might be than of what we know to be. We have frequently experienced a shock at the realization that the greatest of men and the most lofty of movements have their material and often repulsive sides; the more intimate our association with man, the more does his animal nature stand out for the major portion of our time and energy is absorbed by the concerns of physical existence. On the other hand we are frequently surprised at the loftiness of the aspirations and ideals which we find permeating the most prosaic of lives. Balzac emphasizes too much the physical and material side, ~~but~~ ^{yet he does not neglect the spiritual side and} his men and women, exaggerated as they are, impress us as creatures of flesh and blood and not an abstraction. The style, laden with materialism, intensifies this impression by an almost physical reaction on us. In this connection, a citation of a protesting critic is interesting, as an admission that for adequate description the style must partake of the nature of the thing described. In speaking of Balzac's style M. Caro says: "Pour le bien définir il faudrait l'imiter... Il a un choix de mots où éclate une sensualité à la fois violente et raffinée, d'une singulière puissance sur l'esprit et d'une contagion presque irresistible. Si je ne redoutais d'employer ces abominables mots de la science médicale, dont abuse si souvent Balzac, je ne serais pas aussi embarrassé que je le suis pour rendre ma pensée, et je pourrais alors désigner avec précision

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cette maladie des nerfs qui envahit son imagination tout entiere et l'agite convulsivement."(1)

- (1) F. Caro, / Poetes et Romanciers, pp. 355 and 364. Other critics frequently use figures similar to these of Balzac, when they attempt to describe his personality and work. Cf. Taine and Gautier, op.cit.

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CONCLUSION

The psychology of style is too delicate and complex a subject to permit of an exhaustive analysis. A complete study of the origin of Balzac's figures would have to take into account every phase of his complex personality, every influence, external or internal, emotional, intellectual, or physical, lasting or momentary, to which he was subjected.* These elements do not

*Note for example such an expression as: "l'heure vint à l'heure dite un thé suave, savamment déplié" (III, p. 269), in which the peculiar use of déplié is probably explained

by Balzac's thought of his own precious tea, which he kept in paper covered with hieroglyphics and the unwrapping of (cf. Leon Coslan, Balzac en pantoufles, p. 48. which was a kind of ceremony. ~~Similarly~~ Similarly the

flowers sent him by his friends the Duchesse de Castries and Louise while he was writing the Lys dans la vallée may have suggested certain comparisons to him. Five consecutive letters to Louise express thanks for gifts of flowers, three of them mentioning also the Lys dans la vallée. (cf. Correspondance, p. 232 ff.). Also there are the infinite possibilities of literary influence by such men as Pousseau and Chateaubriand; the similarities between the figures of Balzac and those of Rabelais and Saint-Simon result from a similar bent of mind rather than from imitation.

manifest themselves singly; they combine, they interact, they are formed as naturally as crystals are precipitated from a chemical solution. But in my discussion it has been necessary to isolate

the individual elements and treat them as distinct forces; also ^{the} definite statement of a mere tendency, necessary in order to specify and explain it, appears to exaggerate its importance and to minimize the many disturbing and contradictory elements. Confusion will result unless we keep in mind that such an isolation of individual tendencies is really artificial though unavoidable, that they all combine in a complex personality, through the medium of which several may find expression & in the same figure of speech. The following conclusions, ^{introduced} ~~considered~~ in the light of the above statement, may be considered as the result of our study.

The figures of speech form an important element in Balzac's realistic method. In them he attempts to convey more completely and more vividly his own sensations than it would be possible for him to do with conventional French prose. In his attitude towards language he is related to a general liberalistic tendency of his age, and more especially he follows the lead of other original geniuses with creative powers similar to his own -- Rabelais, Voltaire, and Saint-Simon -- who created for themselves a medium suited to what they had to convey. Possessing a vivid imagination which amounts at times almost to hallucination, Balzac ^{is} ~~is~~ inclined to hold that a word, even abstract, should produce a concrete image in the mind of the reader; but he realized also that such is not the case in the faded modern speech. The logical method to induce the formation of a concrete image that will leave a lasting impression is by the simile and metaphor.

The figures serve also as an outlet for Balzac's sentimental effusions; by a succession of comparisons he seems to bathe himself voluptuously in certain emotions. Furthermore he uses

the figures as stylistic ornaments. These two tendencies, which ^{are} are rather romantic traits, ~~appear~~ especially evident in the lys dans la vallée.

While the figures are often effective, a universal verdict of excessiveness needs very little restriction when they are ~~XX~~ judged from an artistic point of view. There are too many figures, they are frequently too pretentious or too materialistic; as a result partly of these last two traits, we find many comparisons that are not apt or appropriate^o, which fact, together with the occurrence of incoherent figures would indicate an imperfect analysis of the similarities between the two objects compared.

If we seek an explanation for the form of Balzac's figures, other than his natural indelicacy and lack of a certain artistic and critical sense, the following points suggest themselves.

1/. Balzac's faculty of losing himself completely in his character^s causes him to use expressions that would be natural only as used by a Houston of a Bridg~~on~~ whom he is painting; a strong character tends to set the tone of the book and he influences the expressions even of the other characters.

2/. Balzac is primarily interested in the internal workings of the human soul, but not being a psychologist he seizes upon them by an intuitive imagination rather than by observation and expresses them in terms of something that he can see, while, on the other hand, physical object^s for which he had an admirable vision are usually described literally. Thus a large proportion of his figures are concrete expressions of spiritual phenomena, and the indefinite impression that they frequently give is probably due to a vagueness of conception on the part of Balzac.

The predominating materialism of the figures is related also to the attitude of mind of the realist who sees the animal and material sides of human nature, in contrast to the romanticist, exemplified by Victor Hugo, in whom we find manifested in the figures of speech a tendency to elevate inanimate nature.

34. The most striking feature of Balzac's figures in the fusion of ideas and imagination which they present and as result of which they fall into well-defined groups according to the conception underlying the comparisons. There is a continual interaction between the conception and the figure: Balzac seems to visualize concrete ³⁴certain banal figures and to deduce from them a scientific theory of a real relation between the two concepts compared; on the other hand, the materialistic conceptions of human nature, expressed in Louis Lambert and growing out of Balzac's general theory of the unity of all creation, are constantly finding expression in the figures of the *lys dans la vallée*, and sometimes the figures is absolutely meaningless unless we trace out its relations to the quasi-scientific theories of the author. The result is an all-pervasive materialism which jars with the poetic pretension^s of the book all the more on account of the minuteness of the comparisons. Balzac visualizes the figures so clearly that he fails to distinguish between the figurative and literal expressions.

In seeking to explain the operation of Balzac on his readers there are three points in his style that should be considered.

14. The figure of speech forces the reader to formulate a definite image and concept before he can grasp the significance of what is being said; thus the idea is more forcibly impressed on him than by a piece^e of smooth conventional prose, where, since the grammatical and logical relations so nearly coincide,

there is no incentive for the formation of concrete images for the individual words. Up to a certain point the style that requires the greatest mental effort to understand may be the most effective for an author whose purpose is not to transmit abstract ideas but to produce an illusion of life, to create.

2. Certain irregularities and confusion of style give a more graphic picture of life by borrowing some of its qualities; also being less conventional, more personal they bring us into more intimate relations with the author.

3. ~~In the same way~~ Materialism of style may aid in giving a more vivid picture of life as we know it; the impression given is that of the real as opposed to the ideal.

In short, ~~a study of the figures and the style~~ of Balzac shows that they bear an intimate relation to his complex personality and to his subject matter, and that their operation on the reader is largely due to this fact.

In view of what has been said, we may ask ourselves what will be the fate of Balzac at the hands of future generations. It has been pointed out that artistic perfection of style, being largely a matter of convention, lacks a certain ~~personal~~ appeal. But in as much as the conventions of art are fairly stable in a given race or group of races, this very impersonality gives a more lasting and more universal character to a literary work; as customs, interests, ideas, and points of view change, the personal appeal of an author is liable to fade, even for those whose cast of mind would naturally incline them to be enthusiastic admirers. This is especially true for an author who represents the mind and soul as so intimately bound up with physical existence; the universal and eternal nature of the manifestations is obscured by the external elements, which, for all

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and to convincing realization, become a hindrance when the age has grown either less familiar or less interesting. Literary work in order to endure should have a universal appeal either as a work of art or as a document of the human soul, hence it is not improbable that the readers of the real Balzac -- not ~~of~~ the author of Eugénie Grandet or Père Goriot-- will be more and more restricted to those who overcome prejudice and mental inertia and put themselves as far as possible in the author's world. For such readers the Comédie humaine will always offer an unlimited store of riches.

A complete bibliography of Balzac would include some thousand titles and I hope in the near future to take part in the publication of such a work. But here, since the materials for the present study must necessarily be drawn largely from a study of the Comédie humaine itself, I have tried to limit the bibliography as much as possible. and There are two sections: the first includes the works that I have found most suggestive in their discussion of Balzac's style or in their appreciation of the complex personality of the man; the second includes general discussions of figures and style, and studies of individual authors, suggestions of theory and method of attack. The citations from Balzac are from the definitive edition, Michel-Lévy, 24 volumes, ¹⁸⁶⁷⁻~~1870~~, 1870. and Ritour & F's Frangère 2 vol Calmann-Lévy 1899-1900.

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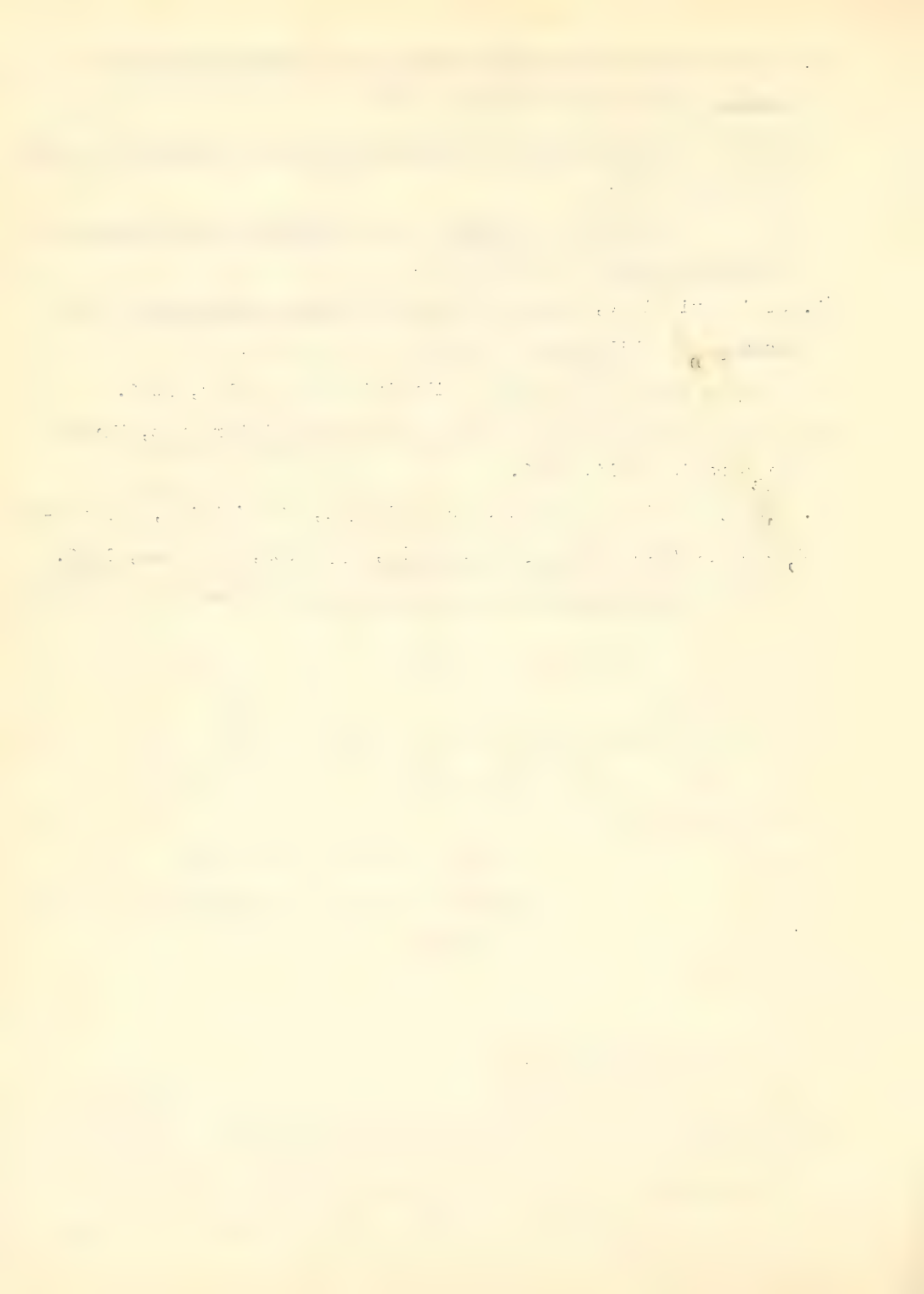
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Vita

Born near Culpeper, Virginia, July 12, 1890, I received my preliminary training from private instruction and at the Randolph-Macon Academy, Bedford City, Virginia. In September 1906 I entered Randolph-Macon College, whence I was graduated with the degrees of Bachelor of Arts in 1909 and Master of Arts in 1910. The next three years were spent as professor of French and German at Millsaps College, Jackson, Mississippi. During the summer of 1913 I studied Romance languages at Columbia University, and in the fall of the same year I entered the Johns Hopkins University, taking French as my major subject and Spanish and Italian as my first and second subordinate subjects respectively. During my first two years I held a Virginia scholarship and at present I hold a University fellowship.

Since my entrance in this university I have attended the courses of Professors Armstrong, Morize, Brush, Leguy, Dargan, Carcassonne, Marden, Shaw, Lovejoy, and Bloomfield, to all of whom I wish to express my appreciation for their stimulus and guidance in scholarship. I wish also to express my indebtedness to Professor Dargan for his advice and inspiration in the study of Balzac, and to Professors Armstrong and Carcassonne for their sympathetic suggestions and for their invaluable aid in the preparation of my manuscript.

born near Budapest, Hungary, July 14, 1894, a native

of Hungary, the first of two children of his parents.

1913 I entered Budapest University, where I was graduated

with the degree of Bachelor of Arts in 1916 and Master of Arts

in 1917. The next three years were spent as Professor of French

and German at Budapest College, Budapest, Hungary. During the

summer of 1920 I studied French literature at the University

of Chicago, taking French as my major subject and English and

Latin as my minor subjects. I was also a member of the

French Club and a University Fellowship.

Since my return to this university I have attended the

courses of Professor Anderson, French, Latin, German,

and Italian, and French, German, and Italian, to all of

whom I wish to express my appreciation for their advice and

guidance in scholarship. I wish also to express my indebtedness

to Professor Anderson for his advice and inspiration in the study

of French, and to Professor Anderson on German and Italian for their

sympathetic suggestions and for their invaluable aid in the preparation

of my manuscript.



